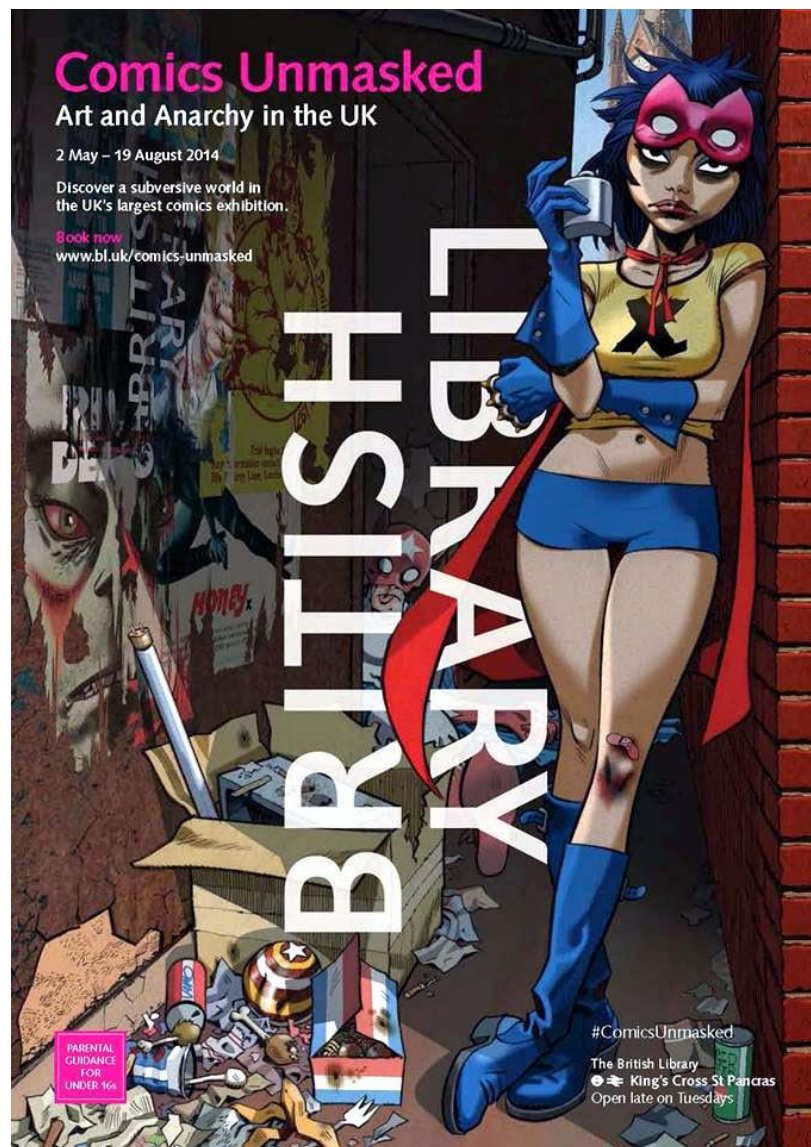


The Fifth International Graphic Novel and Comics Conference



18 – 20 July 2014

British Library Conference Centre

In partnership with *Studies in Comics*
and the *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics*

Production and Institution (Friday 18 July 2014)

- Opening address from British Library exhibition curator **Paul Gravett** (*Escape*, Comica)
- Keynote talk from **Pascal Lefèvre** (LUCA School of Arts, Belgium): The Gatekeeping at Two Main Belgian Comics Publishers, Dupuis and Lombard, at a Time of Transition
- Evening event with **Posy Simmonds** (*Tamara Drewe*, *Gemma Bovary*) and **Steve Bell** (*Maggie's Farm*, *Lord God Almighty*)

Sedition and Anarchy (Saturday 19 July 2014)

- Keynote talk from **Scott Bukatman** (Stanford University, USA): The Problem of Appearance in Goya's *Los Capichos*, and Mignola's *Hellboy*
- Guest speakers **Mike Carey** (*Lucifer*, *The Unwritten*, *The Girl With All The Gifts*), **David Baillie** (*2000AD*, *Judge Dredd*, *Portal666*) and **Mike Perkins** (*Captain America*, *The Stand*)

Comics, Culture and Education (Sunday 20 July 2014)

- Talk from **Ariel Kahn** (Roehampton University, London): Sex, Death and Surrealism: A Lacanian Reading of the Short Fiction of Koren Shadmi and Rutu Modan
- Roundtable discussion on the future of comics scholarship and institutional support

SCHEDULE

FRIDAY 18 JULY 2014
PRODUCTION AND INSTITUTION

09.00-09.30 Registration

09.30-10.00 Welcome (Auditorium)

Kristian Jensen and Adrian Edwards, British Library

10.00-10.30 Opening Speech (Auditorium)

Paul Gravett, Comica

10.30-11.30 Keynote Address (Auditorium)

Pascal Lefèvre – The Gatekeeping at Two Main Belgian Comics Publishers, Dupuis and Lombard, at a Time of Transition

11.30-12.00 Refreshments

12.00-13.15 Parallel Panels

Panel 1: Creators, Art, Business (Brontë Meeting Room)

(Chair: Dave Huxley)

- Benjamin Woo – Who Makes Your Comics?: Preliminary Findings from the Work in Comics Survey
- Bart Beaty – The *Archie* Machine
- Simon Locke – ‘Art’ versus ‘Business’: Rhetorics of Production and the North American Comics Industry

Panel 2: Collaboration and Memory (Eliot Meeting Room)

(Chair: Roger Sabin)

- Matt Green and Ravi Thornton – *HOAX*: A Case Study in Cross-Media and Academic Collaboration
- Andrea Greenbaum – Coexistence Studies and the Graphic Novel Memoir
- Penelope Mendonça - From Interviews to Graphic Facilitation and Fictional Comic Strips: Mothers Storying the Absent Father

13.15-14.15 Lunch

14.15-15.30 Parallel Panels

Panel 1: New Directions in Asian Comics (Brontë Meeting Room)

(Chair: Paul Gravett)

- Lim Cheng Tju – Current Trends in Southeast Asian Comics

- Kodama Kanazawa – Japanese Alternative Comics: Yuichi Yokoyama
- Simon Turner – Queer Manga: An Investigation into the Queer Potential of *Yaoi* Manga and the Fans who Read It

Panel 2: Small Press, Fanzines and New Directions in Distribution (Eliot Meeting Room)

(Chair: Ian Hague)

- Patrick Johnston – Bad Machinery and the Economics of Free Comics – A Small Press Case Study
- Michaela Precup – Glorious Fanzines, Hardcomics, and Old Timers: Contemporary Comics Production and Consumption in Romania
- Joanna Kucharska – Crowdfunding Caped Crusaders: Analysing the New Platforms for Funding, Promoting and Distributing Comics in the Digital Age

15.30-16.00 Refreshments

16.00-17.15 Parallel Panels

Panel 1: The Language of Comics (Brontë Meeting Room)

(Chair: Paul Gravett)

- Franciso Veloso – A Diachronic Investigation of the Comic Book Page: On the Use of Language in Captions
- Alex Valente – “<‘This Sentence is in English>*” - Translating Multilingualism in Italian Comics
- Paul Williams – *Bande Dessinée* Albums in Anglophone North America in the 1970s

Panel 2: Producing a Series (Eliot Meeting Room)

(Chair: Julia Round)

- Richard Williams – The *Perry Mason* Comic Strip 1950-52
- Scott Kaufman and Lynda Haas – Crossing Media, Crossing Cultures: The Cultural and Pedagogical Impact of *The Walking Dead*
- Alison Gazzard and Daniel Goodbrey – *Electricomics*: A Collaborative Digital Comics Case Study

17.15 Close

18.30 Posy Simmonds and Steve Bell evening event

21.30 Conference Dinner (Chutneys, 124 Drummond Street, NW1 2PA)

SATURDAY 19 JULY 2014
SEDITION AND ANARCHY

09.00-09.30 Registration

09.30-10.30 Keynote Address (Auditorium)

Scott Bukatman – 'The Problem of Appearance in Goya's *Los Capichos*,
and Mignola's *Hellboy*

10.30-11.30 Parallel Panels

Panel 1: Intertextuality and Postmodernism (Auditorium)

(Chair: Damon Herd)

- Kat Lombard-Cook – Experiments with Form: Comics' Relationship with Literary Postmodernism
- Matt Green – Recalling Radical Intertextuality: The Many Worlds of Bryan Talbot

Panel 2: Psychoanalysis and Surrealism (Brontë Meeting Room)

(Chair: Julia Round)

- Dan Smith – Uncanny Returns of the Horror Comic in the Work of Hannah Berry and Gareth Brookes
- Mark P. Williams – Systematic Disloyalty to Local Civilization: Surrealism and the Gothic as Contra-Culture in Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's *From Hell*, and David Britton and John Coulthart's *Reverbstorm*

Panel 3: Subverting East/West Ideologies (Eliot Meeting Room)

(Chair: Dave Huxley)

- Will Grady – Subverting the West: Transforming the Frontier in Western Comics
- Chuckie Patel – Bestial Paradises: The Cyclical Pattern of Communist Utopias in Fables - *Animal Farm* and *Superman: Red Son*

11.30-12.00 Refreshments

12.00-13.15 Parallel Panels

Panel 1: Drawing the Line: Women and Boy's Love in Taiwan and the UK (Auditorium)

(Chair: Will Grady)

- Anna Madill – Women Fantasize Pederastic Love: A Subgenre of Boys' Love Manga

- Chi-Shiou Lin – Comparing the Gender Traits of Female Boys’ Love Fans and Romance Readers
- Tien-yi Chao – ‘Dangerous Butler Love’: Eroticising the Master-Servant Relationship in *Blue Morning*

Panel 2: Political Dissent: Testimony, Reporting (Brontë Meeting Room)

(Chair: Nina Mickwitz)

- Leonora Flis – 9/11 Nonfiction Graphic Narratives and Comics Journalism as Testimonies to Terror and Trauma
- Kenan Koçak – Politics in Comics Journalism
- Tasos Anastasiades and Michael Ide – *The Fascista*: A Graphic Novel from Cyprus

Panel 3: Rebel Girls (Eliot Meeting Room)

(Chair: Joan Ormrod)

- Laura McCalla – Positioning Heroism and Villainy in Contemporary Culture: Marjane Satrapi’s *Persepolis*
- Kelly Kanayama – Deadly Little Bodies: Silence and the Asian Female Assassin in Contemporary Comics
- Nicola Streeten – Feminist Fluff: The Legacy of Feminist Cartoons of 1980’s Britain

13.15-14.15 Lunch

14.15-15.30 Parallel Panels

Panel 1: Beyond ‘Popular’: Manga as Radical Representation of Socio-Political Issues (Auditorium)

(Chair: Ian Gordon)

- Monica Setuyo Okamoto – The Social Representation of Immigrants in Japanese Manga
- Fusami Ogi – Are Shōjo Manga (Manga for Girls) Political?
- Hiraishi Noriko – Cross-Dressing, Crossing Gender? : The Impact of *Princess Knight* (*Ribon no Kishi*) in the 1960s
- Raj Lakhi Sen – Boys’ Love Genre: The Adoption System as an Instrument for Clandestine Marriage

Panel 2: Political Dissent: Censorship and Reading (Brontë Meeting Room)

(Chair: Matt Green)

- Antonio Martín – Political and Subversive Comics during Spain’s Transition to Democracy (1975-1982)

- Pavel Koříněk – Get Rid of the Balloons! Censorship of Comics in Czech – and Eastern Bloc – Context: Rules and Formal Consequences
- Louisa Buck – Joking Aside... Hegemony and the Political Cartoon

Panel 3: Violence and Atrocity (Eliot Meeting Room)

(Chair: Roger Sabin)

- Laurike in 't Veld – Visualizing Violence: Atrocity Panels in Jaxon's 'Nits Make Lice'
- John Harnett – Lacerated Frames and the Ambivalence of Iconic Representation: Analysing the Stylistic Techniques used to Highlight Sexualised Violence in *Watchmen* and *Lone Wolf and Cub*
- Andreas Stuhlmann and Sebastian Bartosch – Anarchy of Reading: Order, Transgression, Subversion in Contemporary Comics

15.30-16.00 Refreshments

16.00-17.00 Plenary Session (Auditorium)

Mike Carey, Dave Baillie and Mike Perkins – Perspectives on the Industry

17.00 Wine Reception

19.30 Informal evening meal (La Strada, 15-17 The Brunswick Centre, Marchmont Street, WC1N 1AF)

SUNDAY 20 JULY COMICS, CULTURE AND EDUCATION

11.00-11.15 Registration

11.15-12.15 Parallel Panels

Panel 1: Making Meaning (Auditorium)

(Chair: Simon Popple)

- Roberto Bartual – The Effects of LSD in Comic Grammar: the Cases of Timothy Leary and Alan Moore
- Ariel Kahn – Sex, Death and Surrealism; A Lacanian Reading of the Short Fiction of Koren Shadmi and Rutu Modan

Panel 2: Experiments in Narration (Brontë Meeting Room)

(Chair: Roger Sabin)

- Simon Grennan and Ian Hague – It's a Book! It's a Game! It's *Building Stories*! Play, Plot and Narration in Graphic Narratives
- Paul Davies – Making Sense in Wonderland: On the Comics-Nature of the *Codex Seraphinianus*

Panel 3: Designing Comics (Eliot Meeting Room)

(Chair: tbc)

- Roger Dale Jones – Video Game Fan-Comics as Designed Multimodal and Multimedial Communication
- Evangelia Moula – Comics' Talk about Comics' Industry: Revelatory Instances from Within

12.15-13.00 Lunch

13.00-14.30 Parallel Panels

Panel 1: Producing Cultural Values (Brontë Meeting Room)

(Chair: Joan Ormrod)

- Antonio Venezia – Rubbish Comics: Transvaluation and 'Tijuana Bibles'
- Nina Mickwitz – The Value of Friction
- Maheen Ahmed and Martin Lund – Pantheonic Bricolage: Multiculturalism and Civil Religion in Marvel's *Fear Itself*

Panel 2: Comics at University: Institution Meets Fringe (Eliot Meeting Room)

(Chair: Ian Hague)

- Jakob F. Dittmar – Experiments with Narrative Forms

- Petra Ragnerstam – Teaching Literature through Comics
- Gunnar Krantz – Developing Comics in the Classroom

14.30-15.00 Refreshments

15.00-16.00 Parallel Panels

Panel 1: British Comics (Auditorium)

(Chair: Tony Venezia)

- Julia Round – *Misty*: Gothic for Girls in British Comics
- Simon Popple – ‘The Adventures of Bounderby Bounce the War Correspondent’: The Cartoonist’s View of the War Correspondent in the Anglo Boer War 1899-1902

Panel 2: Understanding Comics Form (Brontë Meeting Room)

(Chair: Simon Grennan)

- John Miers – Depiction and Demarcation in Comics: Towards an Account of the Medium as a Drawing Practice
- Jesús Jimenez Varea – What Do we Mean by 'Comics'? Mapping the Research Object

Panel 3: Reading and Creating Non-Linear Narratives (Eliot Meeting Room)

(Chair: tbc)

- Resa Noel – Students’ Active Transfer of Conventional Narratives into Graphic Narratives: A Linear Process?
- Evita Lykou – Identity Construction through Visual Pathography: Narrating Illness in David Small’s *Stitches*

16.00-17.00 Roundtable: Five Years On (Auditorium)

Where Do We Go From Here and the British Library’s Support of Comics Scholarship

17.00 Close

ABSTRACTS

(A-Z by lead surname)

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**Pantheonic Bricolage: Multiculturalism and Civil Religion in Marvel's "Fear
Itself"**

Ever since Superman's New Deal cheerleading, American superhero comics have reproduced the dominant values of the majority culture and the prevailing definition of what it means to be American. But, as Matthew J. Costello points out in *Secret Identity Crisis* (New York: Continuum, 2009), the aftermath of the 2007 crossover event "Civil War" and the death of Captain America suggests that the contemporary absence of a singular mythic definition of national identity renders collective action difficult, although it may create opportunities to move toward a future free of myth (30). A future free of myth still seems far away, however, and recent comics events hint at the emergence of new national myths with new values.

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***The Fascista* - a graphic novel from Cyprus**

My proposal for the conference is to present the graphic novel that I have just finished working on. The graphic novel is titled "Fascista" and is about a city locked down by a paramilitary group who has been brought in to end long-running protests. It follows the leader of the paramilitary group, a young journalist chronicling their abuses, and an engineer who wants to stay neutral. The engineer invents a weapon to protect himself from the chaos in the streets, but after he uses it both sides want the device to give them an edge in the ongoing violence.

The graphic novel was created as protests unfolded over the last few years in New York, Athens, Cairo, Istanbul, and other places, and we couldn't help but notice the similarities in official reaction as heavily militarized police fought against protestors. The book is meant to show the difficult position faced by someone who does not necessarily support specific protests, but believes that dissent should be allowed in an open society. But one of his inventions captures the interest of a newly formed police unit tasked with ending the protests as well as protest organizers who both believe it will give them an edge in the ongoing street battles.

The story revolves around concepts such as the suppression of free speech, protesting, propaganda and control of the masses. The graphic novel also deals with other issues such as the choices that people make and how the future is affected by them.

The graphic novel is 42 pages long and will be presented through its creating process, thematic concept and empirical understanding and growth.

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The Effects of LSD in Comic Grammar: the Cases of Timothy Leary and Alan Moore

Although first synthesized by Albert Hofmann in 1943, LSD made its appearance in the cultural and social contexts mostly during the 60s and the 70s, causing a great impact in the counter-cultural comix scene. Two of the most relevant titles that directly addressed issues related to the effects of this drug and its philosophical implications were *El Perfecto* (1973), an anthology edited by Aline Kominsky and Robert Crumb in benefit for the defense fund of Dr. Timothy Leary (by then re-imprisoned by the US Government after a previous escape from jail), and *Neurocomics* (1973) by Timothy Leary and George DiCaprio an “educational” comic that advocated a more or less straight-forward approach to the representation of LSD thought pattern alterations and the philosophy of psychedelics.

Until the arrival of *RAW* magazine, strangely enough, the differences between psychedelic-influenced and conventional comics during the 60s and the early 70s were mostly on the ground of theme and graphic style. Narrative structure and “grammar” were mostly unaltered, unlike their cinematic and literary counterparts such as *2001: A Space Odyssey* or *Gravity’s Rainbow*. Even if we consider a title like *Binky Brown Meets The Virgin Mary*, where the thematic and stylistic eccentricities are predominant, we will still find that its narrative is based on a clear chronology and a neat distinction between fantasy and reality. The purpose of this paper is to compare the straight-forward educational approach of the comics that appeared around the controversial figure of Timothy Leary during the 70s (*El Perfecto* and *Neurocomics*), with a contemporary example of “educational comics” that also approaches the subject of LSD, psychedelics and altered consciousness: Alan Moore and J.H. Williams III’s *Promethea*.

Promethea and *Neurocomics* both explore the possibilities of altered consciousness through the use of symbolic means (Leary’s and Moore’s historic/evolutionary interpretation of Tarot is similar in many ways) with a strong emphasis in the changes of thought patterns produced by LSD and meditation (and Magick in Moore’s case). Both titles are, however, representative of their times, since, unlike LSD Comix of the 70s, Moore takes an especial pain in altering the syntax of the sequence when it comes to represent the psychedelic consciousness. This paper will address several common alterations in the psychedelic consciousness documented in scientific publications by Stanislav Grof, Albert Hofmann or Terence McKenna: thought loops, alterations in time and space perception and emergence of symbolic patterns. We will examine how this alterations are represented in Leary’s

Neurocomics and *El Perfecto* without the corresponding alterations in the syntax that are so common in *Promethea*: loop sequences, symbolically framed pages, non-linear mise en page, etc. Every neurologic and syntactic alteration will be properly documented and referred to clinical cases as described by the pioneer in LSD psychotherapy, Stanislav Grof.

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The *Archie* Machine

What are we to make of the fact that over the course of six months, the lead story of *Archie*, the flagship title in the Archie Comics line, featured the main characters bowling? Further, what are we to make of the fact that these stories strongly contradict each other - that in some stories Betty is a novice bowler, while in others she is an expert? Despite, or perhaps because of, the fact that they were among the best-selling American comics of the post-War period, Archie Comics are among the most neglected in the scholarship on the field. This paper endeavours to correct this historical oversight by proposing a method for reading Archie Comics through the lens of mechanization and constraint. Among the striking elements of Archie Comics was their absolute avoidance of continuity, their short form, and their focus on an eternal present in which an idealized version of small-town America could be produced for readers. Archie's creators were tasked with creating dozens of short stories each and every month for decades, working within a highly constrained narrative framework. I will argue that creators including Frank Doyle, Harry Lucey, Dan DeCarlo, and Samm Schwartz developed a self-reflexive and highly modernist conception of the comic book hero in the 1960s when they reached the limits of the Archie Machine. Little noted in the history of the form is the fact that these creators anticipated many of the formal innovations in American comic books that would be credited to underground and alternative cartoonists in the 1970s and 1980s, all the while working within a rigid production system. This tension between innovation and convention, I argue, was the driver of the production side of Archie Comics throughout the 1960s.

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Joking Aside... Hegemony and the Political Cartoon

This paper will examine the role of the political cartoon as a site of hegemonic struggle played out in the public domain, and possible consequential subsequent impact.

Seen as index of time, the successful political cartoon is not only a visual summing up of an event, but can provide a historically insightful and in-depth portrayal of a very particular public opinion on diverse social and political issues. Drawing on a wide range of references and highly intertextual, the political cartoon can be seen as a struggle against hegemony. Challenging the social norm, as constructed and manipulated by the ruling classes imposing their worldview, the Theory of Cultural Hegemony, introduced by the Italian political theorist, Antonio Gramsci, suggests that the 'popular' media was a key site for ongoing hegemonic struggle.

'Looking for the truth behind appearances', the political cartoonist 'sees himself in permanent opposition' (Peter Brookes, *The Times*). The political cartoon can be seen as a direct critique, ridicule and as resistance to government, government figures and government policies. Paraphrasing George Orwell's essay 'Funny but not vulgar', Martin Rowson declared that 'every joke is a small revolution', in a recent talk at the Cartoon Museum. (2012). Rowson considers the political cartoon to be 'an oasis of anarchy in the topography of newspapers'. The political cartoon lies between satire and serious commentary 'Throwing light on taboo' they 'comment from a marginal position on prominent issues'. (Cristina Peñamarín, 1998).

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The Problem of Appearance in Goya's *Los Capichos*, and Mignola's *Hellboy*

During a period of mental breakdown, Goya experimented with darker subjects and new techniques, producing a set of “emphatic caprices” that satirized, caricatured, and allegorized the follies and wrongs of contemporary Spanish culture. Goya’s exaggerated physiognomies revealed a depravity lurking below the surface of society. Much of the imagery would be perfectly appropriate to one of Hellboy’s adventures. It’s well known (and evident) that Goya informs the work of Mike Mignola. His covers owe much to compositional strategies used in the *Caprichos* etchings. But where Goya is allegorical, Mignola is literal. Goya’s grotesques allegorize social corruption, but the same moral/physiognomic link does not hold in *Hellboy*, in which grotesques are among the noblest creatures in this realm.

The *Hellboy* saga refuses the idea that appearance can serve as a guide to what lies beneath. Appearance and reality are at odds within Hellboy’s world, but in a way that actually inverts Goya’s strategies. The grotesque forms of Hellboy and his colleagues are perhaps indicative of what they *are*, but not what they *stand for*. Further problematics of appearance and making visible pervade the genres to which *Hellboy* belongs — stories of *occult detection* and *weird fiction*. This paper will explore the unstable relations of the visible and the invisible in the world of Hellboy, with attention to Mignola’s aesthetic strategies, the gifted sight of the occult detective, who applies rationalist method to the exploration of the unseen, and the sublime description of the indescribable that marks the prose of HP Lovecraft. How does the medium of comics complicate the act of seeing? How does it trouble the surface of appearance and the limits of vision? And how is this enacted in the world of *Hellboy*?

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**Kinshasa, Libreville, Abidjan, and Angoulême:
Transnational Networks and African *Bandes Dessinées***

The impact of *bande dessinée* festivals on *bande dessinée* production and circulation throughout francophone sub-Saharan Africa and the diaspora cannot be overstated. In fact, closer analysis of festivals held in the capitals of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, and the Ivory Coast in conjunction with the annual international festival held in Angoulême, France reveals the critical role such public events play in establishing and reinforcing transnational networks of cartoonists and publishers. For example, in his autobiographical series *La Vie de Pabé*, not only does Gabonese cartoonist Pabé include scenes showing his participation in festivals in Libreville and Kinshasa and uses such scenes to comment on contemporary *bande dessinée* culture in sub-Saharan Africa, he also recounts how such a festival was the catalyst that led to the publication of *La Vie de Pabé*. Moreover, the encounters between different cartoonists during such festivals greatly influence the *bandes dessinées* themselves at the level of content and form. In particular, specific cartoonists such as Barly Baruti and transnational associations such as *L'Afrique dessinée* founded by French-Cameroonian cartoonist Christophe Ngalle Edimo have done much to encourage and promote local cartoonists. This paper traces the history of such festivals and examines their impact on *bandes dessinées* by cartoonists from Africa all while investigating the transnational characteristic of such *bandes dessinées*.

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**‘Dangerous Butler Love!’
Eroticising the Master-Servant Relationship in *Blue Morning***

Butlers, ‘the chief manservant[s] of a house’, remain one of the essential icons in Japanese ACG (animation, comics, gaming) culture, including Boys’ Love (BL), a genre featuring erotic or romantic relationships between men. In mainstream BL works, butlers are very often portrayed by writers and artists as capable, handsome, and even sexy. Interestingly, even though they have to take their master’s orders, they tend to be the ones who dominate the master-servant relationships. Based on Judith Butler’s theory of feminism and pornography, this paper examines the entangled relationship of love, lust, and power between the master and his butler in Shoko Hidaka’s well-received BL manga *Blue Morning*. The progressive development of bond and tension between these two characters indicates an emerging domestic partnership. Such a partnership, I argue, fulfills BL readers’ expectation for ‘equal love’ by subverting and testing the limits of social conventions.

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**Making Sense in Wonderland:
On the Comics Nature of the *Codex Seraphinianus***

"I want the reader flipping through the *Codex Seraphinianus* like a warrior, or like a child who has not yet learned to read, but rejoices in the dreams and fantasies that the images suggest."

Italian architect Luigi Serafini's wildly inventive and anarchic *Codex Seraphinianus* has been entertaining and confusing readers since its publication in the early 80s. It purports to be a 'found manuscript' akin to the Voynich manuscript, written in an alien but tantalisingly familiar-seeming language, and its small print runs and beautiful volumes have made it an object of desire as much as of intrigue. Attempts have been made to decipher the text and numerals, and thereby to 'read' the book, but readers have been kept guessing.

Serafini has revealed in fact that the text is strictly meaningless (though the numbering system does work); but nonetheless the book is in many senses 'readable'. In what ways can this be done? This paper will argue that the text relies on conventions of comics and graphic novels to become accessible despite the alienness of its content; that whilst the 'words' have no semantics and no grammar, the text as a whole has a discourse structure, and shares a textual logic with comics that carries the sense that readers can make of it. This 'comics-nature' is the key to reading the *Codex Seraphinianus*.

Such an exploration of how the *Codex* may be read as a comic can reveal to us some of the qualities of that comics-nature itself, and shed light on the reading approaches that readers take to graphic narrative in more familiar forms too. The paper will draw on the work of Kress and van Leeuwen and Edward Tufte as well as comics theorists to explore the comics-like function of this fascinating and beautiful text.

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Experiments with Narrative Forms

This paper looks at experiments on narrative forms that partly challenge and even change our understanding of what "comics" are and what might be described as mixed media storytelling. Based on a few examples, the benefits of interlinking theory and praxis in comics-education are reflected on critically.

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9/11 Nonfiction Graphic Narratives and Comics Journalism as Testimonies to Terror and Trauma

Graphic narratives,¹ with their literary and graphic expression, join together different variations of storytelling and, when it comes to nonfiction comics, expand the social and cultural map of historical representation. Additionally, they have an immense potential to uncover, through the compound of images and words, the very essence of their depicted subjects and subject matters.

The shock that accompanied the 9/11 attacks on New York City generated many graphic commentaries, autobiographical accounts, as well as fictionalized stories from graphic artists who, in many cases, witnessed with their own eyes the Twin Towers burn to the ground. Many of these graphic accounts have served to express social and political criticism, directed mainly towards U.S. foreign policy, specifically that of George W. Bush and his administration. My paper will investigate those graphic narratives that have the 9/11 tragedy as the main focus of their narrative premise.

Being a devout New Yorker, Spiegelman did not, despite terrible shock, sit quietly and fail to react to what happened to his hometown. His 2004 graphic album, *In the Shadow of no Towers* is a personal, intimate projection of the artist's feelings and sensations during and after the attacks, intertwined with political musings. Two comics industry veterans, Sid Jacobson and Ernie Colón, produced two joint 9/11 graphic projects. The first project, published in 2006, entitled *The 9/11 Commission Report: A Graphic Adaptation*, is based on, as the title suggests, the Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States. Two years later, the artists introduced *After 9/11: America's War on Terror*, which is a collection of news reports, archive information, and their own views on the aftermath of the tragedy. Colón's and Jacobson's comics provide extremely detailed accounts of the horrors of 9/11, pulling the reader right in the middle of the action.

¹ I prefer the term graphic narrative to graphic novel, since not all comics are novels. I agree, therefore, with Hilary L. Chute who has stated her preference for "graphic narrative" on several occasions, including in her latest book, *Graphic Women: Life Narrative & Contemporary Comics* (2010). Focusing on the nonfiction domain in the sphere of graphic narratives, Chute explains: "Even as they [graphic narratives] deliberately place stress on official histories and traditional modes of transmitting history, they are deeply invested in their own accuracy and historicity. They are texts that either claim nonfiction status or choose, as Linda Barry's invented term 'autobifictionalography' well indicates, to reject the categories of nonfiction and fiction altogether in their self-representational storylines." (3)

A great source of versatile graphic perspectives on 9/11 are collections of short comic strips, representing the responses of various artists, such as *9-11: Artists Respond* (2002), a collection of stories by a hundred different artists-writers, including Frank Miller, Dave Gibbons, Eric Drooker, to name a few, the collection *9-11: The World's Finest Comic Book Writers and Artists Tell Stories to Remember* (2002), with Will Eisner, John Constanza, and Richard Corben among the contributors, and the comic book *9/11 Emergency Relief* (2002), that again brought together a large number of artists and writers. I will expose a few short stories from the above collections.

Many of the 9/11 graphic accounts reveal, to a greater or lesser degree, the narrator's immersion in the subject matter (as an actual participant), the presence of the recognizable voice of the narrator, his/her responsibility towards characters, and, most importantly, the search for a narrative/a story in the history, thus matching the characteristics normally regarded as key to narrative or literary journalism.¹ However, despite the detectable critical undercurrent in most of these narratives, few of them address the Arab side of the story, or point to any kind of consequences that America's retaliatory actions have had on the Muslim world. My paper will show that the comics medium can – with its specific sequential format – efficiently mirror the fragmentary remembering process of a traumatic event, as well as represent the multiplicity of sentiments and perspectives of those who experience trauma (incorporating anything from “shock-stirred humor” to deep sense of loss and immobility). Moreover, the selected examples demonstrate that nonfiction graphic books can successfully combine the structural conventions of traditional comics with the subjective focus of narrative (literary) journalism, functioning in this way both as intimate and credible testimonies of immediate or more remote historical and social realities.

¹ Immersion reporting means that the journalist often witnesses the events he is writing about, participates in them, has intimate interactions with other witnesses, and makes every effort to research and comprehend the perspectives of all involved parties. In *Literary Journalists* (1984), Norman Sims defines “immersion” as one of the key characteristics of literary journalism (8-12). He lists structure, the distinct voice of the journalist, accuracy, and responsibility towards the subjects as well as the readers as the other essential characteristics.

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Electricomics: A Collaborative Digital Comics Case Study

The current market for graphic novels is largely paper based and static. While a rich culture has developed around this format and many artists and writers have created innovative works, we have not seen this innovation continue fully into the digital comic age. Too many of the efforts being tried have simply aped the existing form on a mobile device. Electricomics is a new project that aims to develop an open source toolset for the creation of digital comics that augments traditional techniques to create a new and novel interactive format. The toolset and guidelines created by the project will enable creators to utilise the inherent tropes of tablet and smartphone devices to create an enhanced multimedia experience.

Electricomics is collaboration funded by the NESTA Digital R&D Fund for the Arts. The partners include production company Orphans Of The Storm (Mitch Jenkins and comics legend Alan Moore), technology firm Ocasta Labs, the Institute of Education's London Knowledge Lab and the University of Hertfordshire. Amongst the group's research goals are an examination of how the language and tropes of traditional comics are impacted by digital technologies. Further to this they will examine how easy to use and openly available toolsets facilitate rich user generated content creation and artistic collaboration, taking into consideration the relationship between narrative and play.

This paper serves as a report of the project's first five months of operation. It will cover the period of initial research leading towards the creation of a prototype toolset and a series of comics exploring the potential of the new format. This will form part of a vital case study into the benefits of creator-focused digital toolsets within the arts sector and their role in expanding potential sites of creativity. It will also document the transition of a traditional print medium to a digital format and examine how print media can adapt and thrive within this new context.

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Subverting the West: Transforming the Frontier through Western Comics

The Western is our fullest “objectified mass dream,” Henry Nash Smith once postulated. This dream is an ideological terrain which has been reshaped and reinvented with each new generation of hopes and fears. Indeed, throughout the twentieth-century, the Western (particularly in American film and television) was largely a steadfast representative of a conservative mythology, reflecting a particular construction of American national identity. However, the comics medium has often been viewed as a form whose graphic nature has a tendency to articulate extreme content, and narrate material which flouts cultural norms. Therefore, unsurprisingly, Western comics were marked by instances of subversion of this mythology, and parody of the illusory American values and traditions implanted into the Old West. This paper is concerned with the counter-mythic frontier featured in Western comics, and will discuss instances of subversion and resistance to the genre and its myths apparent in a number of titles. These will include humorous comic strips like *Little Joe* (1933-1972); American comic books like Joe Simon and Jack Kirby’s *Boy’s Ranch* (1950-1951), the underground Western comix by Jack Jackson (1970s/1980s); and the *bande dessinée* series *Blueberry* (1965-1971; 1973-1990).

After briefly reflecting upon the Western in other forms – which typically present grandiose visions and triumphant myths of America’s past – the paper will begin to explore how the Western comics unfix, and challenge popular tendencies of the genre. This can include the critique of archetypes such as the cowboy hero, to the emphatic parodying of contentious properties of Western mythology, such as violence, race, and gender. Also considered in this subversion are elements of form. The paper will argue that comics language can invite a resistant reading of the Western, thereby undermining the romantic visions of the frontier. This exploration will help evidence the core argument of the paper that in comics there is potential for readers to construct a new imaginative Western space, which is often more self-consciously parodic, subversive, or knowing than any other form of the genre. The paper aims to locate something in the Western comics beyond other forms of the genre, arguing that the comic book can provide fertile ground to inspire fresh contributions to the ever expanding corpus of studies into the American West.

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HOAX: A Case Study in Cross-Media and Academic Collaboration

A cross-media project combining a graphic novel, *Psychosis Blues*, with a dark musical, *My Lonely Heart*, *HOAX* is based on a selection of poems written by Ravi Thornton's brother Roabbi, during the several-year long duration of his ultimately fatal mental illness, schizophrenia. Roabbi's poems expressed his varying state of mind, and constitute a very honest portrayal of what it was like for him to suffer the illness.

HOAX explores the story and characters around this poetry, the backstory and context for a young, mixed-race man living in an inner city, suffering from schizophrenia, primarily undiagnosed. *My Lonely Heart* combines music and physical theatre to relay the first part of the story (pre-diagnosis), while *Psychosis Blues*, uses comics form to narrate a series of episodes (post-diagnosis) interlinking nine of Roabbi's poems. The project's scripts thus draw on a set of dialogues between sister and brother, present and past, the living and the dead, the fictional and the real. From this dialogical matrix, the project has opened out into a series of collaborations, amongst writer, director, composer, producer, artists, book designer and, perhaps uniquely, an academic invited into the core creative team.

Beginning with a reflection on the principles underpinning collaborative creation, this paper will proceed to explore what happens when the interpretative and theoretical perspectives normally brought to bear upon a finished artwork are incorporated into the process of creative production itself. Whereas the role of the participant observer has become commonplace within the social sciences, within the arts the formal inclusion of the researcher as part of the researched remains much rarer. Equally uncommon, collaboration between creator and critic at the level of academic dissemination (via co-presenting and co-writing conference papers and journal articles) opens up a number of hitherto under-explored potentialities that our paper will discuss. Whilst not overlooking the risks attendant upon collaborations of this sort, the paper will outline the ways in which projects like *HOAX* can transform the relationship between the academic and non-academic worlds, and strengthen the final outcome.

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Recalling Radical Intertextuality: The Many Worlds of Bryan Talbot

As initially formulated by Julia Kristeva, ‘intertextuality’ refers to the direct relationship not only between books, but between all works of art and their social context. Drawing on discussions of dialogism and the carnivalesque, intertextuality effaces the boundary between the imaginary and the historical, between fantasy and the real. However, subsequent uses of the term have tended to de-politicise the concept by limiting its scope to a consideration of the way in which literary texts interact amongst themselves with little or no reference to the wider social world. A large part of the difficulty in retaining (and reclaiming) the more radical scope of intertextuality stems from the conceptual difficulty involved in conceiving of the social world as a ‘text’, a term which is forever sliding back into a more restricted definition involving literal words on a page or screen.

This paper will argue that Bryan Talbot’s works not only exemplify intertextuality (in both its restricted and radical senses), but also that they provide a more sustainable way of conceptualising the relationship between the imaginary worlds of art and the ‘real’ worlds of history. *The Adventures of Luther Arkwright*, *The Tale of One Bad Rat*, *Alice in Sunderland*, and *Dotter of her Father’s Eyes* (co-created with Mary Talbot) are all knowingly intertextual (in a restricted sense) for each presents a sustained set of verbal and visual allusions to other works. Moreover, this referentiality contributes to a thematisation of intertextuality in Kristeva’s more politicised sense, representing the intercourse between the imaginary and the real as a literal confrontation or interpenetration of different worlds: the parallel worlds of *Arkwright*, the use of Beatrix Potter to dramatise post-traumatic stress, the overlaying of Lewis Carroll’s literary geographies onto the landscape and history of Sunderland, and the juxtaposition of Mary’s autobiography and Lucia Joyce’s biography. Talbot’s works thus redeploy the concept of parallel universes — most famously developed in the Silver Age comics of DC — in a manner that is both socially relevant and theoretically significant.

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Coexistence Studies and the Graphic Novel Memoir

In December 2012, I received a grant from both the United States Embassy in Tel Aviv and Barry University to conduct a comic book peace project in Haifa, Israel. The project's objective was to teach Muslim, Jewish, and Christian children, at the Clore Children's Library and Cultural Centre, the techniques of reading and writing graphic novels through exposure to a range of texts and through the use of a comic book creation software program, Comic Life. The software allows students to make comic books by using photographs or scanned drawings and digitizing them. The software provides a framework in which to explore different comic book formats (Graphic Novel, Manga, traditional), and lets the user create dialogue bubbles and narration sequences. The grants covered the cost of the software, books, and cameras.

This presentation will discuss the integration of Coexistence and Peace Studies projects with the use of graphic novel memoirs, and the cross-cultural research developed from that investigation. Moreover, my presentation will include a short documentary film produced from that project.

By exposing the students to three primary texts, Scott McCloud's *Understanding Comics*, to provide a theoretical and historical framework to the craft, and then two books which I thought represented each culture's religious perspectives, Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*, about the Iranian revolution, and Art Spiegelman's Pulitzer Prize-winning book, *Maus*, recounting his father's Holocaust experience, the students created their own cultural narratives through Comic Life. Their memoir-style comic books addressed not only their personal narratives, but incorporated their cultural and political realities of their lives.

The intersection of cultural narratives as manifested in graphic novel memoirs and service addresses how students can use comics as transformative tools for self-discovery. I have learned from my research in this area that teaching graphic novels is an effective device for bridging both literacy and cultural gaps, perhaps because graphics arts are, by their very nature, representational, and therefore more readily digestible to students with limited literacy skills.

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It's a book! It's a game! It's *Building Stories*! Play, Plot and Narration in Graphic Narratives

In reviews of Chris Ware's *Building Stories*, critics regularly draw attention to the board-game like design of the comic's box and elements of the text within.¹ Yet while many have noted the similarities between *Building Stories* and the visual/physical design of board games such as *Monopoly*, and Ware himself has cited 'French "Jeux Reunis" game sets from the late 19th and the early 20th century' as one of the inspirations for the work's design concept, few go as far as to suggest that *Building Stories* actually is a game.²

In this paper, Simon Grennan and Ian Hague will consider the ways in which *Building Stories*' narrative structure mirrors those conventionally found in games. Drawing upon works published by Bethesda Softworks, such as *Fallout 3*, *Fallout: New Vegas* and the *Elder Scrolls* series, as well as comics including Jason Shiga's *Meanwhile* and Actus Tragicus' *Actus Box: 5 Graphic Novellas*, and literary works such as Marc Saporta's *Composition No.1* and B.S. Johnson's *The Unfortunates*, Grennan and Hague will interrogate some of the formal and discursive relationships between play and narrative, such as the productive structuring of choice, the impact of types of accumulated and excluded actions upon plot and the narratological implications of subverting the social habits by which games, comics and literature are defined. Utilising Seymour Chatman's 1978 theorisation of narrative as a 'double time' structure, being the time of the plot plus the time of the text, they will suggest that both games and comics promote specific discourse activities over others as conditions of comprehension, whilst sharing formal structures that are utilised in each register to underwrite the distinctions between them. Hence, it is as possible to choose to read the cells of comic in any order as it is to choose one course of actions over another in a game. Grennan and Hague will analyse the degrees of similarity and difference between these options in their particular contexts, relative

¹ See, for example, the starred *Booklist* review here: <http://www.amazon.com/Building-Stories-Chris-Ware/dp/0375424334>, the *New York Times* review here: http://www.nytimes.com/2012/10/21/books/review/building-stories-by-chris-ware.html?_r=0 and the *Guardian* review here: <http://www.theguardian.com/books/2012/oct/21/building-stories-chris-ware-review>.

² See Hugh Hart's interview with Ware here: <http://www.fastcocreate.com/1681628/chris-ware-brilliantly-bundles-building-stories-as-graphic-novel-boxed-set>.

to an experience of a plot, in order to problematise the relationship between discourse and plot revealed in each medium.

Dr Simon Grennan is Research Fellow in Fine Art at the University of Chester. He is co-editor of Transforming Anthony Trollope: 'Dispossession', Victorianism and 19th century word and image (Leuven University Press 2015) and creator of Dispossession (Leuven University Press 2015), a graphic adaptation of Anthony Trollope's 1879 novel John Caldigate.

Dr Ian Hague is the author of Comics and the Senses: A Multisensory Approach to Comics and Graphic Novels (Routledge 2014) and the co-editor of Representing Multiculturalism in Comics and Graphic Novels (Routledge 2014). He is the director of the annual conference series and website Comics Forum (<http://comicsforum.org>) and the co-creator of the small press anthology comic AB Positive (<http://abpositivecomic.com>).

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Lacerated Frames and the Ambivalence of Iconic Representation: Analysing the Stylistic Techniques used to highlight Sexualised Violence in *Watchmen* and *Lone Wolf and Cub*.

This paper will focus on the depiction of sexualised violence and rape as mapped out through the polysemic scope of sequential narrative. In a medium where both the isolated panel and/or the extended narrative structure of the sequence can very often deliver as much, if not more, of an impact than the written word it pays dividends to deconstruct the visual tools deployed by the artist in an attempt to understand how visual literacy unlocks secondary and implicit meanings within the story as a whole.

Embarking on this visual expedition, yet never abandoning the insights afforded by the written word, this paper will take Alan Moore and Dave Gibbon's *Watchmen* and Kazuo Koike and Goseki Kojima's *Lone Wolf and Cub* as representatives of a western and eastern approach to the infliction of sexualised violence on their respective female protagonists, namely Sally Jupiter and O-Yuki.

This approach will inherently incorporate a detailed psychoanalytical reading as the very medium itself draws a close connection to the psychoanalytical concept of fetishistic scopophilia, or pleasure in looking, a term heretofore applied by Laura Mulvey to film studies. By linking the concept of fetish, a process that valorises and prioritises specific objects or symbols, with the resonant 'power' or lasting effect of panels that depict controversial instances within a visualised narrative, the voyeuristic nature of the medium as a whole shall be discussed.

This approach shall then be reinforced from the perspective of comics studies itself where terminology including iconic amplification, deconstructed frame composition and the diegetic variance between panel and splash page from theorists including Scott McCloud, Thierry Groensteen, Neil Cohn and Will Eisner shall be woven into the argument at large.

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***Bad Machinery* and the Economics of Free Comics:
A Small Press Case Study**



John Allison is one of the few comics artists today earning a living from their comics art, and he is well known on the UK comics scene. However, since he began his first webcomic, *Bobbins*, in 1998, he has given away the vast majority of his comics content away for free. This might seem an impossible situation on the surface, but I believe that it in fact represents a useful model for small press and underground comics, both creatively and economically.

This paper will present John Allison's ongoing comic series *Bad Machinery* as a case study of how to make a working as a cartoonist whose primary work is in free webcomics an economically viable and creatively fulfilling activity with gains in cultural capital, achieved by Allison's use of his webcomics as a springboard for other commercial activities such as illustration work and printed comics. I will provide a context from comics studies to define John Allison's work as "alternative comics" (à la Charles Hatfield) and will argue that despite being indubitably alternative, Allison's promotional strategies and engagement with the culture of alternative comics borrows practices from the corporate mainstream which allow him to profit from his work in comics.

In managing to merchandise and capitalize on his free comics in order to make a profit, Allison essentially becomes a one-man corporation, performing all of the activities of the employees of Marvel or DC and more. By contextualizing John Allison's work within the history of comics publishing and distribution, I will argue that a successful creator of underground or small press comics becomes a one-man corporation which can compete with mainstream corporations for the attentions of comics readers, and will prove this using *Bad Machinery* as a prime example. Through this I hope to show that the future is bright for comics culture in today's digital landscape.

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Video Game Fan-Comics as Designed Multimodal and Mutlimedial Communication

Fan-Comics are a growing form of participatory fan culture left wholly under-researched. They not only provide content for many websites dedicated to art, fan-fiction, fandom, as well as for *up-and-coming* and hobby comic creators, covering popular media like television and film, video games, and other popular comics; fan-comics also serve as communicative acts that generate the negotiation and exchange of meaning between fan-communities and media producers. In this conference, I will present my research on *World of Warcraft* (*WoW*) fan-comics and the website that hosts them. Furthermore, I will redefine comics as forms of designed multimodal and multimedial communication.

In the first part of the presentation, I begin with a conceptualization of fan-comics. This is necessary to understand the multiple genres of communicative purposes fan-comics assume and how that relates to their design. I start by looking at the features of *WoW* fan-comics as a form of *fan-fiction*, which traditionally focuses on linguistic texts. Next, I look at the genres of *comic* and of *fan-art* to come to a better understanding of the multimodality of fan-comics', or the combination of linguistic texts and visual images, as designed communication. In the second part of the presentation, I explain how *WoW* fan-comics serve as multimedial forms of communication. First, I examine the fan-website that hosts the *WoW* fan-comics to exemplify the designed multimediality of communication surrounding them. Using the concepts of *affinity space* and *symbolic interactionism*, I explain how *WoW* fan-comics serve as communicative acts that lead to negotiations and exchanges of meaning, modifying the relationship among comic creators, fans and *WoW* game developers.

In conclusion, by redefining comics as a form of designed multimodal and multimedial communication, I hope to shed light on the rising phenomenon of comic-style storytelling in online fan-communities as communicative acts of meaning making that create fan-communities and connect them to media producers.

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**Sex, Death and Surrealism; A Lacanian Reading of the Short Fiction of
Koren Shadmi and Rutu Modan**

Scott McCloud famously speaks of blood in “the gutter” in his discussion of closure in comics, (McCloud, 1994: 66) and focuses on the role the reader plays in enacting meaning. What is the nature of this eros of reading that enables us to negotiate the multiple possible associations between image and text? In Seminar II Lacan “first presented the death drive as a symbolic-order murder of the image or object by the word.” (Ragland, 1993: 84) For the Lacanian, the text, the word, is the voice of conscious authority, which needs to suppress the multiplicity of the image. Lacan is building on Freud’s sense that “the pleasure principle seems to be positively subservient to the death drives.” (Freud, (1923) 2003a: 102) To engage with Lacanian and Freudian thought in relation to thematic and stylistic closure in comics, we will engage with this charged tension in Freudian thought; that between desire and death, or Eros and Thanatos. I will focus on Rutu Modan’s anthology *Jamilti*,¹ which collects material from both before and after *Exit Wounds*.² Modan’s stories explore the relationship between love and death in the charged crucible of contemporary Israeli society. Koren Shadmi, based in New York, describes a more universally urban, Western milieu in his short story anthology *In the Flesh*.³ In their work, the enacted multiple gazes of artist, character and reader, here represent not sublimation or avoidance, but a direct encounter with the repressed, the objet a, and allows us a deeper kind of satisfaction than the fulfilment of desire; a simultaneous awareness of that desire, and the realities which that desire usually conceals.

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¹ Drawn and Quarterly 2009

² Drawn and Quarterly 2008

³ Villard, Random House 2009

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Deadly Little Bodies: Silence and the Asian Female Assassin in Contemporary Comics

From Cheshire to Lady Shiva, the East Asian female assassin is a common character type in US-published comics – the siren with hyper-developed martial arts skills and a tragic past frequently involving Western colonialism, sexual commerce and/or sexual trauma.

Although the ability to fight and kill is often misrepresented or misinterpreted as a sign of empowerment, in practice depictions of these characters often combine simplistic conceptions of Asian culture with a sexualized focus on the female body, especially with regard to a particularly problematic character subtype: the East Asian female assassin who lacks the power of speech.

This paper argues that depictions of such characters conflate Orientalist portrayals of female Asian identity (Said, 1978) with a lack of verbal agency; this Orientalism manifests in exoticized and sexualized portrayals, childlike rather than adult femininity, and being subordinate to the actions and agency of non-Asian (usually white male) rescuers.

Using three case studies – Miho in *Sin City*, Cassandra Cain in the Batman titles, and The Female of the Species in *The Boys* – this paper examines the formation and reinforcement of racial stereotypes surrounding this character type in Western or cross-cultural contexts.

These include elements of cultural fetishization and exoticism, as mentioned above; the infantilizing, objectification and dehumanization of such characters; the weaponization of Asian female bodies by men or in the service of male-dominated social systems; how the absence of linguistic agency is linked with cultural and racial marginalization; and conversely, how linguistic agency is associated with assimilation into Western culture and the rejection of minority cultural and ethnic identity.

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Japanese Alternative Comics: Yuichi Yokoyama

This paper introduces Yuichi Yokoyama (b. 1967-, Miyazaki, Japan), as an example of Japanese alternative comics, whose work is published in English by PictureBox. He is seen both as a comic artist and a contemporary artist who expresses his art mainly through the comics medium. His art/comics practice is the production of new manga books, which are not serialized in magazines. This is very different from the typical publication style of manga in Japan which serialized stories in magazines before being collected in tankobon volumes. There is heavy editorial influence, and meticulous marketing and media development involved. In contrast to mainstream manga, Yokoyama's work does not have attractive heroes. Rather his stories depict the deliberate passing of time and spatial distance, showing fresh landscapes with stunning visuals. I believe Yokoyama's work shed new light on fixed understandings of the Japanese manga world.

Kodama Kanazawa is a curator who specializes in contemporary art and Japanese comic culture. After the graduating from Tokyo University of the Arts, she worked in Contemporary Art Museum, Kumamoto and Kawasaki City Museum, where she has contributed to a number of shows, including Yokoyama Yuichi Solo Exhibition (2010). Currently, she is pursuing a MA in Curating Contemporary Art at the Royal College of Art.

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**Crossing Media, Crossing Cultures: The Cultural and Pedagogical Impact of
*The Walking Dead***

Since Romero's 1961 classic, the zombie genre has impacted American culture, horrifying viewers while simultaneously causing them to think critically about cultural values. According to Kyle Bishop, the genre has increased in popularity since 9/11, reflecting our deepest cultural anxieties and allowing us to play out survivalist fantasies after the apocalypse ("Dead Man Still Walking"). Currently, Robert Kirkman's *The Walking Dead* graphic novel series is one of the most influential and significant zombie texts in American culture, aided by media cross-pollination between the comics and "the most watched drama series telecast in basic cable history," according to TVbythenumbers.

This paper will be presented as a dialogue about the series across several media—comics, television, and video games—and a discussion of the series' cultural impact and effectiveness as a pedagogical tool for teaching visual rhetoric and cultural studies to undergraduate students. We will address some of the most interesting moments of media cross-pollination in the series; for example, we will focus on the character of Carl between the media and his similarity to a "Generation 1.5" student who allows us to re-imagine the zombie genre as not only a story about survival, but also about immigration—how people enter into a new habitat and find their place within it (David Hopkins, "The Hero Wears the Hat").

The Walking Dead is a particularly relevant text for this conference because in addition to cross-pollination between media, it has also been the stage for crossing between American and British cultures. For example, in the first issue, Kirkman paid homage to (some may say copied) Danny Boyle's *28 Days Later*, and when Frank Darabont recreated the series for television, British actor Andrew Lincoln was cast to play Rick Grimes; in later seasons, more British actors joined the cast, notably David Morrissey as the Governor.

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Politics in Comics Journalism

Comics journalism is written and drawn in comics medium, and claims to convey its readers a truthful statement about or record of some hitherto unknown new future of the actual, social world. It is literary journalism in comics medium. A comics journalist acts as an artist and writer and is the last representative of the long visual and literary journalism tradition.

The agenda of comics journalism is highly shaped by politics. Most of comics journalism has been made up of the responses towards the politics of the world's superpower U.S. In post 9/11 era, there appeared too many examples of comics journalism compared to pre 9/11 era. Before the attacks, there were a few prominent works: *Palestine* (1993-1995), *Soba* (1998) and *Safe Area Goražde* (2000) by Joe Sacco, *Fax from Sarajevo* (1996) by Joe Kubert and *Shenzhen* (2000) by Guy Delisle. However, after September 11, comics journalism has gradually developed into a more political sector with new comics journalists like Sarah Glidden, David Axe, Ted Rall, Josh Neufeld, Dan Archer, Kemal Gökhan Gürses, and websites solely devoted to comics journalism like *News Manga* (Japanese), *The Common Language Project*, *The Cartoon Picayune*, *Archcomix* and *The Cartoon Movement*.

Turkish artist Kemal Gökhan Gürses' *Ayşegül Savaşta: Irak Şahini* is a highly political response to the American invasion of Iraq. Sarah Glidden's *The Waiting Room* and David Axe's *Everyone Told Us Not to Go to Syria* are about Syria where there is an ongoing civil war for nearly three years. Ted Rall's *To Afghanistan and Back* and Dan Archer's short works illustrate hard-to-reach and dangerous areas of the world. Joe Sacco has produced several works on Bosnian and Palestinian conflicts whereas Guy Delisle has written travelogues from less known North Korea, China, Myanmar and Palestine.

This paper seeks to examine politics in comics journalism by comparing pre and post September 11 with references to the above mentioned comics.

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Developing Comics in the Classroom

This paper discusses comics courses taught at the School of Arts and Communication at Malmö University as a platform where different actors meet and influence each other — producers, publishers, fans, industry. Rather than seeing the university as part of the institutionalization of an artform, the classroom functions as a catalyst for the development of comics.

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**Get rid of the balloons! Censorship of comics in Czech – and Eastern Bloc –
Context: Rules and Formal Consequences**

The proposed presentation will take a look at the various transformative effects of the censorship of comics in Nazi, communist/Stalinist, communist/normalizationist context and, at the same time, at the authors', producers' and publishers' attempts to prevent a total ban by adaptation of various "defensive" strategies both on the level of form and content. Following the "new censorship" debate and Foucault's, Bourdieu's, Kuhn's and Holquist's notions on the constitutive nature of censorship, the institution of censorship will be considered here not only as a strict repressive agent of oppression and control (of "silencing"), but more importantly as a key participant in the evolution (or re-shaping) of Czech comics tradition. The influence of censorship (in its widened definition) can be traced in the emergence of locally and temporally specific sub-genres (e.g. educational strips, pioneer's adventure strips), in the occurrence of various formal transformations (e.g. the disappearance of speech balloons and the re-introduction of text inscriptions in prose or verse) as well as in the specific "defensive intermediality" of hybrid comics/prose series.

Building on examples from the history of Czech comics and also analyzing the materials from creators' estates as well as documentation from the state archives, the different types of these censorship-stimulated reactions will be determined and carefully interpreted. Similar situations were to a degree present in several neighbouring countries, so this Czech example therefore allows us to explore the censorship-instigated transformations of local comics traditions in the Eastern Bloc. Of transformations, that in the end contributed to the shaping of the specific national comics traditions with their somewhat peculiar formal attributes, some of which are still recognizable to this time.

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Crowdfunding Caped Crusaders: Analysing the New Platforms for Funding, Promoting and Distributing Comics in the Digital Age.

The aim of the paper is to investigate the way creators and fans utilise crowdfunding platforms and strategies to produce and promote comics and graphic novels outside of the institutional means of production and distribution. As comics have always been rooted at least partially outside of the mainstream and corporate institution, with widespread fandom distribution, fanzines and independent production, the first part of the paper will briefly analyse the previous grassroots initiatives and how they contribute to the current state of comics on the crowdfunding scene. In the second part, the paper will concentrate on the existing crowdfunding platforms and their advantages and disadvantages for comics creators and fans, as well as the tactics employed by the comics authors in promotion and creation of both successful and unsuccessful crowdfunding ventures. We will also touch upon the initiatives of establishing Comics Accelerator, a crowdfunding platform dedicated solely to comic books. In the final part of the paper, we will consider a case study of Womanthology a large scale comics anthology showcasing the works of women authors. This paper will concentrate on the strategies of promotion and the discourse surrounding the anthology both as a crowdfunding venture and a project functioning within the discourses of representation of female characters, writers and artists in the field.

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The Gatekeeping at Two Main Belgian Comics Publishers, Dupuis and Lombard, at a Time of Transition (in the 1980s)

Especially in a time before the breakthrough of the internet and specialized software, comics artists were almost completely depended on the publishers for reproducing and distributing their work. Unfortunately there are very few studies of the functioning of comics publishers, but they are without doubt an important factor in the comics creation process. For instance it is the publisher who takes a financial risk by paying the material production of comics.

On the basis of a participant observation at the editorial offices of two important comics publishers Dupuis and Lombard (conducted in the summer 1985) and various contemporary interviews with both the gatekeepers (editorial staff) and the artists, the gatekeeping process will be traced out: how were comics selected, how was the interaction between editors and creators, who were the gatekeepers and what were their criteria for selecting comics suited for publication (in a weekly or as an album)...

The results of this research were published in 1986 as a master paper in Dutch, *De selekterende stripuitgevers. Een onderzoek naar de gatekeeping bij de grote stripuitgeverijen Lombard en Dupuis* [The selecting comics publishers. A gatekeeping study of two big Belgian comics publishers Lombard and Dupuis], but never published in any other language afterwards. However, even after 3 decades, the results of this exploratory research are still relevant for understanding how such players in the comics industry changed: in the 1980s the main Belgian comics publishers were moving from a rather autonomous family-run-business to a subsidiary of a larger media concern. This meant an important shift in the way comics publishers dealt with their creators. This paper re-examines the results of the gatekeeping research at that crucial time and will situate it in a larger context of comics publishing history.

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Comparing the Gender Traits of Female Boys' Love Fans and Romance Readers

Boys' Love (BL) is now a popular genre among female readers in the Asian countries especially in Japan, China, and Taiwan. BL is love stories of two or more male characters created predominantly by women for women. The female fans are by and large heterosexual. Why do straight women/girls read and fantasize about male-male romance? Previous studies suggest that the pleasures of BL reading are partially derived from a sense of defiance of gender stereotyping and the rejection of the patriarchic relations between men and women. BL is viewed as an alternative form of the romance genre, offering its fans an opportunity to see different male images, love relationships, and for some, explicit male bodies and sex scenes, jubilantly and celebratorily. This seemingly "feministic" attitude of female BL readers as documented in the author's previous research led to the current inquiry on BL readers' gender traits. Are BL readers less "feminine" than romance readers? The current study employed online survey to collect data from female BL and romance readers to compare their gender traits. The questionnaire contains multiple assessment questions derived from the Bem's Sex Role Inventory (BSRI), which had been translated and tested for their validity in Taiwan's sociocultural context. In this presentation, the researcher will report on the methodological concerns of the study design and will share some preliminary findings from the initial statistical analyses.

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‘Art’ versus ‘Business’: Rhetorics of Production and the North American Comics Industry

Over recent decades, there has been much debate about the relationship between ‘art’ and ‘business’ in the production of comics in North America (i.e., the United States and Canada) with a sharp contrast between the two often presented. Informing this is a long history of intellectual critique of ‘mass culture’, but the contrast has also played a critical role in the discourse of comics producers themselves. Thus, although the notion of ‘mass culture’ has been subject to extensive criticism and revision, the contrast remains a common feature of scholarly representations of the organisation and working practices of the ‘mainstream’ comics industry through the metaphor of an ‘assembly line’ (e.g., Harvey 1996, Hatfield 2005, Duncan and Smith 2009), which seems to have been adopted from comics creators (notably Will Eisner). Through this metaphor, industry practices are represented as antithetical to the production of works of ‘art’ seen, ideally, as products of a single artist’s creative activity unmotivated by the economic concerns associated with ‘business’. In this paper, however, rather than treating the contrast as an accurate description of industry practices, I view it solely as a feature of the discourse of members of the comics community, arguing that it is a rhetorical characterisation employed in defence of an idealised notion of ‘art’. By way of illustration, I examine the use of the contrast in the discourse of some high-profile comics creators and publishers, including Gil Kane, Dave Sim, Todd McFarlane and Gary Groth, during a period of relative turmoil in the industry during the 1980s and 1990s. It is argued from this that: (a) the categories ‘art’ and ‘business’ have attached to them a set of commonly recognised attributes that may be mobilised to advance contrastive characterisations, but which are open to inventive modification in accord with specific argumentative purposes such that they may also be represented as compatible; (b) inferences about the extent to which the contractual relations and organisation of the labour process in the mainstream comics industry have a bearing on the ‘artistic’ quality of its products rely upon the rhetorical contrast rather than features inherent in those industrial practices; and (c) the adoption by comics scholars of a description of these practices through a metaphor of the ‘assembly line’ uncritically adopts the same rhetoric presenting at best only a partial and selective account of the mainstream industry and the aesthetic character of its products.

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Experiments with Form: Comics' Relationship with Literary Postmodernism

The past 15 years has seen a resurgence of literary work that could be classed as postmodern. Authors like David Foster Wallace, Michael Chabon, Jonathan Lethem, David Eggers, and Jennifer Egan, to name a few, have created work that deconstructs literary realism utilizing many of the themes that Barry Lewis cites as major components of postmodern literature, although he would call any work created after 1990 postpostmodern (Lewis 2001). Time is a fluid construct to be tampered and played with and there is the preoccupation with portraying a subjective, fractured reality with no reliable narrator that eschews the conventions ascribed to literary realism and structuralism.

Comics, with the medium's unique ability within printed matter to transcend the specificity of the written word via the dialogue between text and images, provide even more opportunity to break down these constructs. There are also reading structures that are specific to the grammar of comics that can be utilized to challenge reading conventions. It may be of little surprise then to learn that some of the authors mentioned above have also penned comics as part of their oeuvre. This is not to say that these writers are attempting to bring a postmodern literacy to comics, but rather that they have joined the body of work that has been created from at least the 1970s that has co-evolved with the prose avant garde. This paper will examine the relationship between postmodern comics and prose, starting with the underground comix scene in the 1970s, specifically R.Crumb's work, moving on to Art Spiegelman's 1977 *Breakdowns*, Spiegelman and Francoise Mouly's work on *RAW* in the 1980s and 1990s and then discussing how the movement made its way into more mainstream works by writers such as Moore and Morrison.

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**Identity Construction through Visual Pathography:
Narrating Illness in David Small's *Stitches***

Using the Freudian concept of a psychoanalytic construction of identity through the personal narration of a life story (illustrated by authors as Freud, Anthony Elliot, Anthony Giddens Richard Jenkins and Adam Phillips), in this paper I am going to discuss David Small's graphic memoir *Stitches* as an example of a visual pathography. I will present the idea of the narration through the comics medium as a fundamental aspect of the construction of the idea of the self. I propose that the function of the visual medium has a deep psychoanalytic aspect with a dual function. The author inscribes in the complexity of the medium traces of unconscious thoughts (which have been part of their identity construction process) and the reader perceives them and translates them into a more personal narration, inflicting their own unconscious thoughts. *Stitches* combine aspects of physical and mental illness culminating to a liberating breakdown. The hero is a boy growing up in an unstable family, particularly due to the reserved and domineering character of his mother. On a brief note at the end of the book we are allowed a pick on the other side (the mother has been suffering crippling pain throughout her life, she also was hiding her sexual preferences for the same sex. Both of these made her bitter and rough). Sickly as a child, the hero is subjected by his father (a medical doctor) to radiation treatment. In his adolescence he develops an imposing tumour on his neck, the removal of which results in the removal of part of his vocal chords. His illness and medical (and psychological) suffering is described graphically with a series of imposing illustrations. Matters of guilt, fury, rage, sorrow, an entire panel of negative feelings fill the pages of the novel, providing rich material for a discussion on the management of memory and the transformation of experience through narration which are the main building materials for the construction of personal identity.

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Women Fantasize Pederastic Love: A Subgenre of *Boys' Love* Manga

Original Japanese Boys' Love (BL) manga is available in English translation and has a growing readership in the UK. These erotic texts are created predominantly by and for young women and portray romantic and sexual relationships between usually young men. Sometimes these young men are, or appear to be, adolescents or teenagers in relationship with an older youth or man. Such age-stratified, male-male relationship can be considered a form of pederasty. Pederasty is illegal in most contemporary societies although has a long, if not uncontroversial, history in many cultures. This paper will explore how women are fantasizing pederastic love in BL manga through the analysis of a reasonably large sample of original Japanese BL available in commercial English translation since the turn of the 21st century. The paper will consider the role of such stories in women's erotic culture within the context of social, and possibly legal, sanctions.

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Political and Subversive Comics during Spain's Transition to Democracy (1975-1982)

Between 1939 and 1975, dictator General Franco, backed by the military and the Catholic church, controlled absolutely every aspect of life, either public or private, in Spain. In such a context, all civil rights were abolished, including freedom of expression, and comics were no exception to that rule. The medium was submitted to censorship, with the resultant effect of an overall dumbing down of its contents for the national readership. At the same time, many comics makers developed a parallel line of more mature products for foreign markets, which achieved a relative degree of recognition and influence. Franco's demise opened the doors to a political process which has come to be known as "the Spanish Transition to Democracy" (1975-1982), whose first milestone was the Constitution of 1978. That three-year interval was a rather chaotic period in which different social and political forces clashed and fought for power positions both within the parliament, but also outside. In this sense, popular dissatisfaction generated a heterogeneous, plural extra-parliamentary opposition made up of Maoists, Trotskyists, Basque terrorists, anarchists, extreme right-wing activists... This convulsive scene was mirrored by the comics of the time, some of which adopted the various radical stances of these subversive groups while the state and the political parties that supported them also used the medium to propagate their respective messages. Thus, comics became instruments of protest, propaganda and ideological indoctrination in the framework of what could be considered a veritable war of words and pictures in a variety of formats and supports: magazines, pamphlets, leaflets, fanzines, flyers... This paper attempts to convey an accurate idea of how comics reflected the magnitude and character of the social conflict that followed the end of Franco's dictatorship.

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**Positioning Heroism and Villainy in Contemporary Culture:
Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis***

Leaderless political events have become quite commonplace in today's society. The Ché Guevaras and Mao Zedongs of the world have been replaced by Facebook and Twitter: today's protesters are not called to arms by an idealistic peer, but rather by words that have been reposted online an unfathomable amount of times. Similarly, the target of political and revolutionaries' ire has become an intangible entity. In the digital age, it has become very difficult to define the heroes, villains, and antiheroes of any given movement. Given that much of the world at large is still experiencing the fallout brought about by the Arab Spring, I would posit that it is perhaps a good idea to look back at other revolutions with comparably murky origins in order to understand those aforementioned labels.

In Marjane Satrapi's seminal, biographical graphic novel, *Persepolis*, a young girl who dreamed she would be God's next prophet accompanies the reader down the rabbit hole of the 1979 Iranian revolution— rife with protest, warfare, political prisoners and sharia law. Fearing for the life their only child, who becomes both increasingly free-spirited and rebellious in the face of a suppressive regime change, Satrapi's parents send her to boarding school in Vienna, Austria. Much as in the case of today's revolutions and social upheavals, what starts out as very clear cases of heroes and villains quickly becomes tales of antiheroes— people both moral and corrupt, selfish and valiant.

This paper explores how the banishment of a young nonconformist ultimately served to create an anti-heroine: a drug dealer, a divorcée, and a woman possessing the courage to stand up for herself in a male-dominated and exceptionally harsh environment. This will ultimately serve to illuminate how literature may come depict today's revolutions and uprisings, despite there being no clear-cut heroes, villains, or antiheroes.

Laura McCalla earned a bachelor degree in French from the University of Pittsburgh and is currently an English literature doctoral candidate at St. John's University in New York City. Her research focuses on the manifestations, cultural depictions and the societal impact of the tragic mulatto in literature and visual literacies.

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**From Interviews to Graphic Facilitation and Fictional Comic Strips:
Mothers Storying the Absent Father**

This paper will critically explore an innovative method for producing a graphic novel, using the theme of mothers storying the absent father as a case study.

By responding to pre-drawn and live visual recording during interviews participants help shape both the interview process and research findings. The responsive and open nature of 'graphic facilitation', combined with the versatility of comic strips enable different kinds of conversations from the traditional interview method. Here, participants are invited to engage with fictional characters, project their thoughts and ideas onto them, and contribute to the development of a fictional graphic novel. By capturing participants' own words, including those that are passionate or humorous, the researcher gains a rare insight into what is a particularly personal and potentially difficult topic. Fragments from interviews are then processed and restructured in the light of theory and context, and reconfigured into a series of playful yet challenging comic strips. The aim here is to produce an impactful and accessible take on the analysis, and to strengthen the novel's content by combining (and contrasting) voices on this one complex subject (Horton, Furnee, 2013).

Often employed for organisational development or public engagement, graphic facilitation involves leading group discussions through the design and use of large strategy maps or templates. Graphic recording is the production of a visual summary live in front of a group.

The paper will draw on my practice-based PhD (Central Saint Martins) looking at how pregnant women/ first-time mothers of young children represent absent biological fathers (or donors) through their stories of conception, pregnancy and parenting.

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The Value of Friction

In *Comics versus Art* (2012) Bart Beaty considers contexts, networks and processes of production and consumption in order to offer an alternative to functionalist definitions of comics and to theorise a ‘comics art world’ (Beaty 2012: 36-44). Offering an invigorating perspective from which to address comics in relation to cultural hierarchies his model draws on Harold Becker (1982), according to whom ‘art worlds do not have boundaries around them’ (Becker 1982: 35, cited by Beaty 2012: 38). However, this paper aims to highlight how boundaries, while neither fixed nor immutable, can play a crucial part in the production of value.

Yuri Lotman’s (1990) notion of semiotic space and boundaries offers a way to consider friction and interchange predicated on difference and distinction; how value is produced as comics are brought into contact with other spheres and categories they conventionally have been seen as separate from. Moreover, Lotman’s concept of a multi-layered *semiosphere* enables consideration of both situational and textual aspects of such traffic.

Particular meanings continue to be potently generated from and in relation to specific histories and cultural heritage; a comics ‘register’ (Gregory 1967:194) encompassing both aesthetic, material and social dimensions. When comics are brought into contexts of institutional tradition and legitimacy these aspects are heightened as a particular point of interest.

Interactions between comics and other systems and codes of communication also occur on a more specifically textual level: interaction between form and media; explorations of materiality; increased genre categorisations. The expanded repertoire of comics presents a weakening of the ritual classifications (di Maggio 1987) that identified the form as distinct, if of an inherently low status.

Drawing on Lotman, this paper intends to examine the production of value as comics partake in different kinds of boundary dialogue, both textually and extra-textually.

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**Depiction and Demarcation in Comics:
Towards an Account of the Medium as a Drawing Practice**

Despite the insistence of many authors on the primacy of the visual in comics, there has been comparatively little attention given to the drawing practices that create comics texts, or the ways in which readers of comics are able to recognise graphic marks as having demarcative functions, as in the case of balloon or panel borders, or depictive functions, as in the case of narrative images. This paper will argue for the value of, and make some initial proposals regarding the nature of, an account of comics production as a distinct drawing practice, not as a rejection of language-centred accounts, but as a necessary complement to the understandings they enable. Accounts of depiction by Kendall Walton, Michael Podro and Patrick Maynard describe a process of imagining into drawn marks, in which the viewer maintains an awareness of their own cognitive activity in taking the sight of the image before them as the sight of the depicted subject. Readerly awareness of this type is well-known to comics researchers through discussion of the cognitive effort involved in achieving what Scott McCloud famously describes as “closure”, yet such discussions generally begin with the assumption of the reader’s recognition of depicted scenes. A full account of this fundamental operation of comics reading also requires an account of the methods by which readers use what is perceptually presented to them to imagine events taking place within the images, and how recognition of characters, locations and objects is sustained across serial appearances. This paper will develop the theories of Walton, Podro and Maynard to suggest ways in which the particular operation of drawing in comics both creates and satisfies the reader’s expectation of narrative.

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Comics' Talk about Comics' Industry: Revelatory Instances from Within

Self-reference is a much discussed characteristic of postmodernity and of popular culture too. It challenges the borders between fiction and reality and it connotes the self-reflexivity of our era. Comics as a medium take to this practice often, in diverse ways and for various reasons. One of the medium's foremost and most characteristic versions of self-reference is when comics treat the subject of comics' industry, referring to the whole spectrum of it, from the design and the production to the distribution and promotion of the medium. Groensteen classifies this instance as a "metaphorisation of the code" of comics. For him, the "code" of comics comprises the medium's graphic material, its specific mode of representation, its production processes and the (social) institutions surrounding it. The foregrounding of the code is self-reflexive, but not necessarily metaleptic. It refers to the production context of the real world but does not necessarily transgress the boundary between the fictional world and the real world. So, in comics one can find references to this vital part of comics' code, mostly with a denunciative tone, emphasizing the censorship and the suffocating deadlines imposed on the comic artists, broaching copyright issues, commenting on the star system and the strict hierarchical structure of the industry, lamenting on the compromises an artist has to make, the exploitation, the blackmails, the low income and even the jostling and the undermining among colleagues that takes place in comics' industry. In this paper we are going to present such instances from comic books in order to focus on comics from an alternative point of view and shed light from within.

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Students' Active Transfer of Conventional Narratives into Graphic Narratives: A Linear Process?

Existing literature on using graphic novels as a pedagogical tool rarely reported on the complexities of constructing graphic narratives as part of disciplinary content. This paper draws from a wider case study designed to explore the pedagogical potential of graphic novel texts in developing Grade 7 students' literacy skills over one school term. Teachers' practice did not include graphic novels so a professional development workshop was held to develop strategies for the integration of graphic novel texts into the English Language curriculum. Then, they used a pre-designed teaching Unit plan to formulate lessons for the deconstruction of one graphic novel text; and the construction of conventional narratives, storytelling via words, later transferred into graphic narratives, storytelling via words and pictures. Lastly, students' and teachers' experiences were captured through multiple data sources such as interviews.

This paper examines the following: In what ways are conventional narrative writing strategies and knowledge transferrable to graphic narrative writing, and vice versa? In what ways did the graphic narrative writing aspect of the Unit plan impact students' conventional writing achievement scores? A framework including transfer learning theories, semiotics concepts, and 'pedagogy of multiliteracies' concepts frame the results show the dissonance created as students negotiated the diverse demands for transferring their conventional narratives into graphic narratives. These findings will contribute to the wider discourse on the way in which the integration of graphic narrative writing can 'problematise' or enhance existing pedagogies and ways of learning within the English Language curriculum.

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Cross-Dressing, Crossing Gender?
The Impact of *Princess Knight* (*Ribon no Kishi*) in the 1960s

Tezuka Osamu (1928-1989) is still considered Japan's most important manga artist, sometimes referred to as "the God of manga". One of his great achievements was the foundation of "Story manga" in the period after World War II, elaborating on prototypes from the 1920s. By incorporating novelistic and cinematic structures into *manga*, he helped the form transcend the conventional concept of the medium, and gained popularity and dominance.

This paper focuses on *Princess Knight* (*Ribon no Kishi*, literally 'Knight with a Ribbon'), a girl-oriented serialized work that started in 1953. It became popular following Tezuka's remade version that was serialized from 1963. A 1967 animated series, which was soon dubbed into English (1970), Spanish (1972), Portuguese (1973), and French (1975), also abetted the manga's popularity. Set in a medieval European fairy-tale-like place, the main feature of the story is the circumstances of the heroine, Princess Sapphire, who must pretend to be a male to be eligible to inherit the throne.

Although Tezuka's work did not directly threaten gender roles, the gender-crossing representation of Sapphire had an enormous impact on the audience. A close analysis of Sapphire's descriptions and other works created by female manga artists will shed light on the Japanese sanction against crossing gender/sexual borders of the day. The paper will also examine the desire and strategy for transcending the boundaries.

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How Are Shōjo Manga (Manga for Girls) Political?

The key to many manga representations, especially those of shōjo manga, can be found in the concept of "kawaii". The English word "cute" is often regarded as equivalent to "kawaii", signifying something small and weak, something non-threatening like pleasant children and pets. It is often used for certain women, as well, but rarely for men. Obviously, kawaii designates the comparatively powerless, and therefore shōjo manga have characters who seem to pursue love and romance. These cute female protagonists tend to expect the appearance of princes who will protect them from the evils of the world. However, it is also true that shōjo manga convey strong political and social messages, despite their kawaii images. Especially in recent years, when manga and kawaii culture has stretched beyond Japan, diverse messages of resistance have become prominent.

Considering how shōjo manga produce political and social meanings, often of a subversive nature, my presentation will consider the concept of kawaii and explore the relation between messages and styles of manga and comics for girls. These manga have not merely been creating cute and pretty images for girls. One of my main focuses will be Moto Hagio's works, which have led the way in the formation of the genre of Japanese shōjo manga since 1970, and which now even outside Japan have been recognized as among the most important classic manga works, even though few of these classic shōjo manga have yet been translated into English.

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The Social Representation of Immigrants in Japanese Manga

This paper studies the social representation of the Japanese immigrant in *The Four Immigrants Manga: A Japanese Experience in San Francisco, 1904-1924*, (1931) by Henry Yoshitaka Kiyama. The author tells his own saga and that of his three friends as immigrants in the United States, in an period of racism and discrimination against Asians. This study examines how Kiyama produced the personalised representation of Japanese immigrants and also how the author worked with the *manga* medium in a different cultural context from Japan. What reasons Kiyama had for portraying his experience as an immigrant in the United States in the form of *manga*. Apparently, like many immigrants, Kiyama wanted to leave a record as a legacy for subsequent generations. *The Four Immigrants Manga* was the first *manga* to be produced in the United States.

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**Bestial Paradises: The Cyclical Pattern of Communist Utopias
in *Fables* - *Animal Farm* and *Superman Red Son***

Mark Millar's *Superman Red Son* and Bill Willingham's *Fables* both subvert familiar tales, Superman and fairy tales respectively. *Superman Red Son* poses the question 'what if Superman had landed in communist Soviet Union?'. The Communist Party, ruled by Superman, peacefully expands the Soviet Union to almost every corner of the globe. While the Soviet Union prospers, free of poverty and crime, the United States is close to collapsing. Yet, centuries later, when this utopic society fails to take measures against the collapse of the earth into the sun, a young father sends his child back into the earth's history (a child who will later become Superman). While *Superman* sympathises with the communist utopia presented in the graphic novel, only to collapse the structure at the end, *Fables, Volume 2: Animal Farm* takes the opposite tact. It presents beloved fairy tale creatures as anarchists and murders, equitable to Stalin's government, but suggests that while the bloody methods are not justified, their end goal is still a desirable one. Prior to the events of the book, the fairy tale creatures were forced to flee their perfect fairyland, into the 'real' world, the world of the mundane. Those who were unable to camouflage with human society are sent up to a farm in upstate New York: to Animal Farm. The graphic novel offers an obvious parody of George Orwell's *Animal Farm: A Fairy Story*, as the fairy tale animals revolt against the loss of freedom enforced by the humanoid fairy tale government. But the animals and humans share a greater purpose of hoping to reclaim their lost utopic existence. This paper will explore cycles and collapses of utopians societies, and will utilize theories put forth by Llyman Tower Sargent and Ernest Bloch, especially in regards to the concept of a totalitarian static within utopian societies.

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‘The Adventures of Bounderby Bounce the War Correspondent’: The Cartoonist’s view of the War Correspondent in the Anglo Boer War 1899-1902

The status of the press and particularly the persona of the war correspondent came under particular scrutiny during the Anglo-Boer war. In the midst of a new media saturated conflict the satirical press increasingly focussed on the legitimacy of reporting which fed into a complex and self-reflective popular war culture. Anti-imperialists such as J.A.Hobson were at the forefront of developing a critique of the presses’ role in the creation and fabrication of blindly patriotic coverage that was translated into the popular culture of the Jingo and celebrated across a broader popular cultural sphere dominated by Music hall. A target of this growing leftist sentiment was the war correspondent, and satirical cartoonists made them a particular focus. This paper will examine the culture and representational strategies deployed in the depiction of the war correspondent through an evaluation of the popular character of Bounderby Bounce- a fixture in the *Big Budget* from the outset of the war- making his first appearance in December 1899.

Over an extended series of adventures Bounce is presented as an incompetent, red-nosed and hard drinking duplicitous fool. In his first strip all this attributes are seen at play- he is kicked out of an interview in General Buller’s tent, carried drunk to the front line by a contingent of native porters, seen inventing a sketch form behind a large rock and is frightened by an elderly one-legged Boer- whom he repels with clean water (a constant racist rebuke) He finishes his day in the press tent with a bunch of other dissolutes and steals a dispatch from the pocket of another sleeping correspondent. His persona seems both to chime with the traditional view of the correspondent as adventurer- and at the same time offer a serious critique of the nature of news and reporting in a new technologically mediated arena. It also marks a transition between the satirised older tradition and a new professionalism being developed at the same time- and it is within this frame that I want to read such cartoons.

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Glorious Fanzines, Hardcomics, and Old Timers: Contemporary Comics Production and Consumption in Romania

This paper will introduce the contemporary Romanian comics scene, which is an exciting if chaotic environment full of heated debates, and dominated by fanzines and anthologies, mainly because of the lack of appropriate funding for producing longer comics. In a country where publishers have only recently begun to selectively understand that comics is not an exclusively humorous or child-oriented medium, there are two main centers for comics production: Bucharest, the capital, and Cluj, the largest city in Transylvania. Only one publishing house, Hardcomics, run by Miloš Jovanović, a Serbian expatriate living in Bucharest, focuses exclusively on comics, and published mostly anthologies, with a few exceptions (such as *The Year of the Pioneer* by Andreea Chirică, about growing up in the 1980s in communist Romania, as well as *Strîmb Life* and *Strîmb Living*, the first queer comics published in Romania). Hardcomics contributed to the consolidation of the underground comic book scene in Romania, described by Jovanović as “this region of the East long forgotten by the almighty comics gods.” The editorial policies of Hardcomics (www.hardcomics.ro), which encouraged “the best, the amateur and the downright illiterate” (Jovanović) and published younger comic book artists generally influenced by the American underground (but also artists with no formal background in drawing or illustration), infuriated both fans and members of the older generation of Romanian cartoonists who became established during communism, and whose painstakingly realist style has not changed since the 1980s.

At the same time, the Romanian comics scene is also populated by a number of long-standing fanzines, such as “The Glorious Fanzine,” “Zin-ne,” “Sefeu,” “Otaku Magazin,” “Colosus” etc. Apart from introducing all these various publications of the Romanian underground, in this paper I am also going to question the editorial and funding policies that keep a growing number of Romanian cartoonists in “the underground” because they do not create the premises for the adequate production and distribution of their work.

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Teaching Literature through Comics

This paper discusses the ways in which comics can be used in teaching and understanding literature. Literature today can no longer be seen as a field separate from other cultural expressions, but continues to exist in/as those expressions. The way literature is taught at Malmö University, comics are not seen as derivative from their literary original (adaptations), but as part of the constitution of literature as such. In this way comics manage to renew the classics regarding aesthetic forms as well as content.

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Graphic Statements: Aestheticizing the Political in *Palestine* and *Jerusalem*

Within the field of graphic literature, visual accounts of travels abroad have been popularized by writers such as American comics journalist Joe Sacco and French-Canadian graphic chronicler Guy Delisle. In both Sacco's *Palestine* (serialized from 1993-2001, collected in 2001) and Delisle's *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* (2012), the comic medium is employed to capture their journeys through the Middle East and efforts to artistically render their many encounters and observations. But although *Palestine* and *Jerusalem* can both be categorized as autographic texts, since each conveys the personal experiences of its artist/writer, the tools and tactics used to tell these stories are markedly distinct and serve as a visual indication of Sacco and Delisle's divergent artistic and sociopolitical aims.

With a specific consideration of the visual presentation of each graphic narrative, my paper investigates how Sacco and Delisle differently employ the generic conventions and styles associated with war comics, autography, and graphic travelogues in *Palestine* and *Jerusalem*, respectively, to distinct political ends. I argue that, while *Jerusalem's* stylistic consistency parallels the narrative's sense of stability and the formal uniformity of the chronicle, *Palestine's* distended documentary realism and consciously chaotic panel arrangement reinforce Sacco's stated intention to create a work of "comics journalism" that is both factually-based and explicitly subjective. Consequently, I contend that, in the same way that Delisle's stylistic borrowing from conventional cartooning allows *Jerusalem* to eschew taking on political gravitas, Sacco's visual alignment of *Palestine* with the shared aesthetic of print media or political cartoons reinforces his desire to stylistically infiltrate and subvert popular depictions of the Occupied Palestinian Territories during the first intifada.

Ultimately, my paper offers a comparative reading of Joe Sacco's *Palestine* and Guy Delisle's *Jerusalem: Chronicles from the Holy City* that highlights the hybridity of the comic medium by exploring the potential for images and visual style to play either an affirmative or anarchic role within a graphic text.

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***Misty*: Gothic for Girls in British Comics**

This paper will consider the use of gothic and horror tropes in British girls' comics of the 1970s and 1980s. Many leading British writers of boys' comics (Alan Grant, John Wagner, Pat Mills) began with girls' comics and James Chapman notes the "superior storytelling and characterization" (2011: 110) of these titles. However, the attempts of 1950s girls' comics to construct a "socially approved model of adolescent femininity" (Chapman 2011: 111) became complicated in these decades by the emergence of darker horror themes and gothic narrative structures.

Misty (Fleetway) is an anthology comic with both serialized and one-shot stories, published weekly between 1978 and 1980 (#1– 101). *Misty* and DC Thomson's *Spellbound* were the first British horror comics since the 1950s and this paper will consider the way in which *Misty* draws on some of the tropes of the previous generation of American horror comics, including the use of a host figure, moral messages, and 'O. Henry' stories, and its modification of these as they are combined with female protagonists and other generic features designed to appeal to a young female audience.

Misty also makes extensive use of irregular panel layouts, broken borders, layered panels and innovative layouts and splash pages, which feature in almost all stories. Although it seldom uses direct address except on the inside cover, pages frequently drag readers into the story visually. Embedded stories and complex flashbacks are also employed in a similar manner to the pre-Code American horror comics. This paper will explore these areas to demonstrate that *Misty* resituates and rearticulates the tropes of American horror comics for a new audience.

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**Boys' Love Genre:
The Adoption System as an Instrument for Clandestine Marriage**

Boys' Love (BL) is a subgenre of Japanese manga, which depicts the Junjou Romance (Pure Hearted Romance) between boys having homoerotic relationship. Its conception is mainly attributed to *shōjo manga* (girls comics) and *yaoi* in Japan in the 1990s, possibly owing to unprecedented popularity among female readers. Some recent work has expressed concern at women's interest in BL, as it is both written and read predominantly by women who manifestly find pleasure in cross-voyeuristic activities such as imagining watching or reading about gay relationships illustrating both painfully physical and psychological states. Additionally, scholars have raised concerns about issues that might occur because of the commercial success of the Boys' Love genre in the global market, since it has been translated by US publisher Tokyopop and it seems to be contributing to Japanizing the global child pop-culture and also supposedly boosting the problems related to child pornography.

This paper departs from recent scholarship that focuses on BL manga readership and the target audience, to analyze how these BL narratives give access to Japan's domestic social and legal issues, which very often get lost in the process of translation owing to the complex laws and social customs of Japan. In *Classmates* (2008) and *Graduates* (Winter and Spring Vol. 2010) by Nakamura Asumiko, the author insinuates ironically that gay marriage vows were exchanged in the shadow of the Japanese adult adoption system to legitimize their relationships. These works also enable imagining re-structuring patriarchy where homo-social and sexual relationships are taken into a completely new social dimension.

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**Uncanny Returns of the Horror Comic in the Work of
Hannah Berry and Gareth Brookes.**

The graphic novels *Adamtine* by Hannah Berry and *The Black Project* by Gareth Brookes offer strange, powerful and affecting returns for the presence of horror within anglophone comics. These contemporary horror comics are recent moments in a long history which includes the pre-code era comics of the United States, and the resurgence of horror in the 1970s, a history that can be traced through works published by EC and Warren, to Alan Moore's *Swamp Thing* and through to the ongoing *Walking Dead* series. However, this is a history that mirrors a more general acceptance of horror as a ubiquitous and comforting category within the entertainment industry. Horror in cinema, television and literature is generally dominated by banal and unimaginative tropes which appear to have neither the power to scare, or to disrupt the smooth surfaces of social reality. I would like to suggest that the reinventions of horror comics offered by Berry and Brookes reposition horror as a source of critical and disruptive reading experiences. Horror comics may be no longer viewed as a corrupting influence upon the young, leading children to violence and delinquency, but these manifestation offer powerful and engaging disturbances. Might such disturbances be aligned to disruptions of normative subjectivity, moral certainty and the fixity of social order? The idea of the uncanny, as outlined by Freud and reworked by Mike Kelly, will form the basis for understanding these contemporary horror comics as spaces of disturbance inhabited by readers. The politicisation of the uncanny will be drawn out through Hal Foster's readings of surrealism, particularly his analysis of Hans Bellmer and the idea of the automaton, while it will be argued that *Adamtine* and *The Black Project* achieve their specific uncanny and disruptive power through an attentiveness to the narrative possibilities of the medium itself.

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Feminist Fluff: The Legacy of Feminist Cartoons of 1980's Britain

“...laughter in the face of serious categories is indispensable for feminism.
Without a doubt, feminism continues to require its own forms of serious play.”
Judith Butler¹

In this paper I will show how the lightness and fun in British feminist comics played a significant role in the popularisation of feminist ideas in Britain during the 1980's. Further, that comics and cartoons were the visual reflection of fundamental ingredients of fun and laughter in the development of ideas within the feminist movement. I will illustrate my paper with examples by cartoonists such as Jacky Fleming; Angela Martin and Catherine Jackson whose cartoons appeared in publications such as *Spare Rib*; *Trouble and Strife* and *Sour Cream*.

As a political movement, feminism's association with humour and fun has not been highlighted, perhaps due to an anxiety around not being taken seriously. An assumption of feminism as serious has become reinforced within comics through recent publication and popularity of women's graphic memoirs of traumatic experience. Implicit in this is the notion that women's comics of personal experience *must* be about trauma. As part of “the personal is the political” tenet of feminism, works of personal trauma continue to be critical in making the private public as a means to address social taboos. However, in Britain, women have also been developing feminist ideas through comics based on personal observational responses to socio-political contexts. Presented in comics form, serious political messages are conveyed whilst also being funny and personal. I will focus here on how this manifested itself in 1980s Britain and the legacy this created for women's comics today.

¹ Butler, Judith (1990) *Gender Trouble, Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York, London: Routledge, p viii

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Anarchy of Reading: Order, Transgression, Subversion in Contemporary Comics

The comic has been regarded as a subversion of the established order of the arts. It invites a non-linear, unpredictable, flaneuring, hence anarchic practice of reading and appropriation by the reader. Its semiotic structure of panels, grids and speech balloons offers, as Michel de Certeau has put it, a layout for both a meandering navigation and for ruthless poaching. Anarchy, in the words of Noam Chomsky, “seeks structures of hierarchy and domination in human life over the whole range, extending from, say, patriarchal families to, say, imperial systems, and it asks whether those systems are justified.” If these structures can’t prove their given authority, this authority “ought to be dismantled and replaced.” (Chomsky/Wilson 2013) But what constitutes the anarchic drive within the comic? At first glance, it is a transgression and subversion of certain semiotic as well as socio-cultural norms, typical for pop culture. On the same token, and this makes it a cognate to the carnival in Mikhail Bakhtin’s definition, it stabilizes the very order of codes and behaviours it subverts. Therefore it is no surprise, that comics have been for decades an integral part of juvenile (male) culture, their whole semiotic structure likes them to the very nature of puberty itself.

In his highly celebrated comic *Black Hole* (1993–2004) Charles Burns is alluding to this notion. He gives a contemporary rendition of William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*, translating this classic novel about juvenile anarchy into the more anarchic form of the comic and updating the storyline by introducing the trope of the pandemic among other elements.

In Dylan Horrocks’ *Hicksville* (1998), the relations between imposed (semiotic) structures, methods of their subversion and means of their reassertion are explored on several levels. The medium of the comic is introduced as a means of possible escape from the laws of the ordinary world. The eponymous fictitious town of Hicksville is a refuge where these norms are suspended and simultaneously replaced by another peculiar set of rules. So if anarchy, following Chomsky’s definition, is a dialectical figure of questioning order and its re-introduction, then the comic is a medium of anarchy, in form, content and reception.

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Current Trends in Southeast Asian Comics

With US and European economies fully developed, the new economic powerhouses are to be found in Asia, namely China and India. Southeast Asia as a region is seen as a giant area of growth. But with its diverse people and culture, are there commonalities to be found in Southeast Asian comics? What kind of stories is being told in Southeast Asian comics? What are the issues and concerns? This paper seeks to answer these questions and to consider Southeast Asian comics' position within global comics.

Lim Cheng Tju is an educator who writes about history and popular culture. His articles have appeared in the Southeast Asian Journal of Social Science, Journal of Popular Culture and Print Quarterly. He is the country editor (Singapore) for the International Journal of Comic Art and also the co-editor of Liquid City 2, an anthology of Southeast Asian comics published by Image Comics. He is currently pursuing a MA in Curriculum Pedagogy and Assessment at the Institute of Education.

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Queer Manga: An Investigation into the Queer Potential of *Yaoi* Manga and the Fans who Read It.

The aim of this paper works towards answering the question: who are the *yaoi* fans?

The vocabulary used when discussing *yaoi* associates itself with identity politics such as “straight women” (Wood 2006), “Japanese girls” (McLelland 2001), and “women’s sexual subculture” (Mizoguchi 2008). The assumed heteronormativity of fans accompanies a categorisation of fans that becomes part of the common *yaoi* discourse, essentially that fans are straight women writing and reading about gay men, who are really straight women in disguise (Ueno 1998).

Sheenan (1992) criticises the tendency to associate certain genres in sexist ways, for example, studies of *yaoi* have been informed since their beginnings with notions that all fans are women. Quantitative results (McLelland 2001; Pagliassotti 2010) do indicate that *yaoi* is indeed a woman’s space. However, although the assertions may be based on actual statistical evidence, I question the implicit assumption that heterosexual female fans read *yaoi* heteronormatively by pointing to queer theories.

I present my own data gathered from *AarinFantasy*. A way to examine *yaoi* fans’ activities, is not only to uncover the existence of other types of ‘queer’ fan categories such as male, homosexual, bisexual, and lesbian but to also separate heterosexuality from heteronormativity. Heterosexuality may be thought of as the “lubricated set of interactions between [heterosexual] bodies”, i.e. biologically male and female whereas heteronormativity is the “institution...that makes heterosexuality coherent” but which is nonetheless “a concept distinct from heterosexuality (Berlant and Warner 1998, p.565). By separating heteronormativity from heterosexuality *yaoi* becomes a means for fans explore alternatives to those offered by normative heterosexuality. This queer approach aligns itself with a new attitude towards *yaoi* studies (Nagaike 2003; Mizoguchi 2008; Yoshimoto 2008) that allows for a nuanced understanding of the *yaoi* fandom and the diversity of its fans.

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**“<This Sentence is in English>*”
Translating Multilingualism in Italian Comics**

Though characters in Italian comics may come from Italy, Sweden, UK, Bosnia-Herzegovina or Japan, most interactions will be written in Italian (and the same applies in most cases with Anglophone and Francophone publications) with a number of devices to alert the reader to the fact that they are, in fact, not speaking Italian but Swedish, English, Bosnian or Japanese. Angled brackets with editorial footnotes, different fonts and colours are easy enough to deal with, but what happens when actual foreign languages creep into the script, and how does that affect their translation into English? The paper explores how Italian comics authors employ multilingual dialogue, code-switching, code-mixing, neologisms and anglicised names to highlight macro-functions of *identity* and *setting*, and sub-functions of humour, characterisation, legitimisation and prestige. The focus will be on series such as *Dampyr* (Bonelli) initially set in the Balkan area to later expand across the globe, and *Paperinik New Adventures* (Disney Italia), set in pseudo-North American metropolis Paperopoli. I suggest a range of translatorial strategies based on the above discussions and the work of Delabastita (e.g. 1996) and Epstein (2009), so as to successfully maintain the multilingual and multicultural elements of the source in a target text, with the introduction of the concept of *assertive minimal* or *non-translation* (after Lindqvist 2012): the translator's choice to not translate a text into another language, but rather mark its foreignness in the target.

**Translated from the Italian – Academic Alex.*

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What Do we Mean by “Comics”? Mapping the Research Object

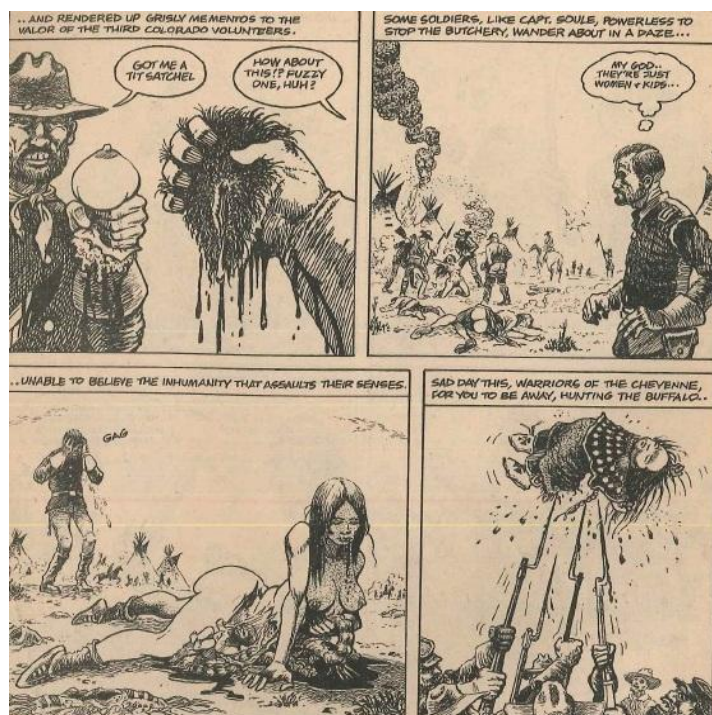
The Palo Alto group stated, “You cannot *not* communicate,” and even though this lemma was later moderated, it is undeniable that communication is one of the most important and characteristically human phenomena. Comics belong in the broad and ever-changing array of forms through which we convey messages to each other through exchange of expressive matter, coded by the sending agent and decoded by the receiving side, in their respective historical contexts and with a pragmatic projection that diachronically originates a cultural environment involving industrial uses, perceptions of the medium, and a general set of boundary conditions that determine the way it develops in each region. The paper proposed through this abstract proposes a communicational model (see below) to map and frame the study of all aspects related to comic, including production and institution, drawing from a multidisciplinary range of works: Hjelmslev’s linguistic model –adapted to literature, film and cartoons by Chatman-, David Berlo’s SMCR model –inspired in Shannon’s model-, Schramm’s circular view of communication, as well as Innis’ and McLuhan’s Toronto School of technological determinism, to name just a few of the different approaches that have been integrated. The purpose of the model is to locate within it what figures of comics studies such as David Kunzle, Scott McCloud, Umberto Eco, R.C. Harvey or Neil Cohn meant when they used the term “comics”: visual language, medium, object, culture, contents...

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Visualizing Violence: Atrocity Panels in Jaxon's 'Nits Make Lice'

In number 7 (1976-1977) of the politically and socially engaged comix magazine *Slow Death*, Jaxon's shocking story 'Nits Make Lice' explores the Sand Creek Massacre of 1864; the brutal attack on a peaceful encampment of Cheyenne Indians by Colorado militia. Jaxon depicts the events in detailed black and white images, not eschewing the explicit representation of (sexual) violence. The comic ties in with thematic and stylistic elements of the underground comix, but also departs from the movement through its serious tone and realistically drawn images. In analysing this comic strip in *Comic Books as History*, Joseph Witek asks us if the truth can be too awful to be seen: "Is there an aesthetics of atrocity?"

This paper will explore these "atrocity panels" in conjunction with the context of the underground comix and *Slow Death*, demonstrating the balancing act that Jaxon engages in. I will analyse how Jaxon frames the violent attack on the comics page, arguing that the depiction of the perpetrators and their actions connects to the images of gore and horror often present in underground comix. At the same time, the historical weight of the story and the depiction of the Cheyenne Indians balance the sex, drugs and counterculture of the comix movement. The comic prefigures the representation of violence in the work of artists like Joe Sacco (*Safe Area Gorazde*, among others), Dave Sim (*Judenbass*) and Paolo Cossi (*Medz Yeghern*). I will also trace to what extent atrocity panels are part of these more recent comics, exploring if the inclusion of explicitly rendered violence is a necessary and productive element in representing catastrophe.



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**A Diachronic Investigation of the Comic Book Page:
On the Use of Language in Captions**

The study of comics has increased largely in the past few years, as the number of publications and diversity of areas examining them demonstrates. Klock (2002), for instance, suggests comics have been more traditionally carried out within three major areas: structural mythology, cultural history and cultural studies. Bramlett (2012), for instance, presents a number of studies in comics from a linguistic perspective, covering topics such as register, code-switching and diachronic studies on language change through comics. This study falls under the second approach to the analysis of comics. Based on an on-going research project that aims at verifying diachronic structural changes in comics as multimodal artifacts, this presentation examines the use of verbal language in captions, by contrasting superhero comics stories from the 1930s, 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. The selected stories have been transcribed into an annotation system that allows the decomposition of the semiotic modes (Bateman, 2011), focusing especially on the use of language to construe the narrative. The preliminary results demonstrate a reduction in the number of words in captions, as well as a change in their function in the process of semiosis on the comic book page.

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Rubbish Comics: Transvaluation and ‘Tijuana Bibles’

Pornography and comics share a cultural history of being traditionally regarded as ephemeral and disposable, relegated to the margins of systems of value and dismissed as ‘rubbish’. The two media intertwined in the ‘Tijuana Bibles’, pornographic comics whose popularity peaked in the 1930s and 1940s. Such comics were illegal and circulated via furtive networks. The irony is that they are now highly collectable. This paper will examine how this transvaluation has come about.

Michael Thompson’s *Rubbish Theory: The Creation and Destruction of Value* (1979) provides a conceptual framework to examine how the processes of valuation work. Thompson identifies two categories in which we place cultural objects: the transient and the durable. Transient objects can be thought of as having finite life-spans, decreasing in value over time. Durable objects possess longer or even infinite life-spans, retaining or increasing their value. These categories are as much social as cultural: durable objects are regarded as more valuable than transient ones, so groups with wealth and power may try to keep their objects in the durable class.

Thompson suggests that change occurs within this system through the intermediary of a third, covert category: rubbish. A transient object decreases in value and becomes labeled rubbish. It exists in suspension lacking value, but it has a chance of being re-discovered and transformed into a durable object (Thompson, 9).

Using the specific historical example of Tijuana Bibles, I want to trace the movement from transient and clandestine to durable and collectable. These comics have gone from under the counter to being remediated and republished in online collections and glossy anthologies (see Adelman et al 1997; and Dowers 2009). Thompson’s theory allows us to examine processes of valuation which have occurred with pornographic comics, and in turn to consider how such processes might work in other fields.

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**Systematic Disloyalty to Local Civilization: Surrealism and the Gothic as
Contra-Culture in Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's *From Hell*, and David
Britton and John Coulthart's *Reverbstorm***

I will examine the seditious and anarchic use of Gothic and Surrealist impulses in 1980s and '90s countercultural fictions through two long-running graphic Horror series which span the period: Alan Moore and Eddie Campbell's *From Hell* (1989-1999), and David Britton and John Coulthart's *Reverbstorm* (1994-2013).

Remobilizing the decadent and destructive impulses of the Gothic through appropriations from Modernism, Surrealism and psychedelia, *From Hell* and *Reverbstorm* are devastating, transgressive assaults on "Britishness", "Englishness" and "British values". Moore and Campbell's Victorian Gothic graphic novel *From Hell* (1989-1999) produces a postmodernist historiographic meditation on the events surrounding the Ripper murders; while Britton and Coulthart's experimental graphic fiction *Reverbstorm* (1994-2013) charts a non-linear dream narrative around Lord Horror, a satirical anti-hero based on WW2 traitor and British Nazi "Lord Haw-Haw", William Joyce. I contextualise these transgressive texts theoretically through Paul Gilroy's conception of unaddressed melancholia in British culture regarding its imperial and wartime history (*Postcolonial Melancholia* 2005).

I argue that UK countercultural texts such as these texts practice the 'systematic form of disloyalty to our own local civilization', negations of national identity politics, which Gilroy suggests can create spaces for new cosmopolitan conviviality to emerge (Gilroy, 71). I will discuss the problematic textual elements which produce difficulties for this reading in respect to *From Hell* and *Reverbstorm*, and the extent to which their self-reflexivity overcomes this, and then examine how they present themselves as radical narratives within an international milieu through appeals to European intellectual traditions (philosophy, avant-gardes) and American popular culture (cult fiction, rock'n'roll). Ultimately, I suggest that by *Gothicizing* and *Surrealizing* the most troubling and destructive elements of British history, British Imperialism and British fascism, these uncomfortable fictions place a complex set of demands on their readership with a great deal of radical, critical potential.

I am an independent academic with primary interests in contemporary literature and politics; I specialise in science fiction and fantasy, and am particularly interested in the intersections of the fantastic, the political, and the avant-garde. I have recently published on British small press

writing in Gothic Science Fiction 1980-2010; on globalisation and the avant-garde in relation to Zimbabwean experimental writer Dambudzo Marechera for the collection Reading Marechera; and I am also a contributor to twenty-first century writing journal Alluvium where I have been publishing a series of articles on UK 'alternative fictioneers' and 'insurgent subliterations'. Forthcoming publications include chapters on 1970s literature and on experimental literature of the 1990s for Bloomsbury's Decades Series, as well as chapters on China Miéville for London in Contemporary British Fiction and China Miéville: Critical Essays.

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***Bande Dessinée* Albums in Anglophone North America in the 1970s**

Between its founding in 1976 and its transformation into NBM in 1983 the US company Flying Buttress Publications attempted to relocate Francophone *bande dessinée* albums into the North American marketplace. On a literal level this meant reprinting the work of French comic creators in English, but FBP had a more ambitious and abstract goal too, the translation of French comics culture across the Atlantic. Founder Terry Nantier saw FBP's 'graphic albums' as a carrier device through which comics in America might enjoy the same respect and cultural legitimacy that *bande dessinée* was gaining in France. FBP stressed that their graphic albums were the harbingers of a paradigm shift in comics publishing, with greater physical dimensions than newspaper strips, a more progressive attitude towards creators' rights than mainstream comic companies, all contained within an affordable, durable package. These graphic albums were distributed using the direct market, the mail order and head-shop distribution channels of the underground, and to book stores via a deal Nantier signed with Caroline House in 1980. FBP's graphic albums were intended to have an appeal beyond the existing audience for comics in North America, and it had a means of reaching them. But sales were slow, FBP had to lower prices to shift its print runs, and the company turned away from the graphic album as a publishing format in the 1980s.

This paper is primarily a historical narrative of the establishment of FBP, its publication of graphic albums in the late 1970s, and its divergence into the newspaper strip nostalgia market in the 1980s. However, as modernist scholar Lawrence Rainey asserts, historical narratives can carry an argument too: my argument is that while the head-shop consumers and the burgeoning direct market made it possible for Nantier (a student self-funding his publication activities) to enter the comics marketplace and sustain three graphic albums, the audience for these types of text in bookshops was virtually non-existent – they were an unknown quantity that book stores were unable to determine. As such, the story of FBP illustrates the limits on the book store market for comic collections in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

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The *Perry Mason* Comic Strip 1950-52

The paper will document and analyse the production of the Perry Mason comic strip (1950-52), arising from my research of the archival material in Erle Stanley Gardner's papers at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin (where I held a Visiting Research Fellowship in 2011).

The papers give a comprehensive and very detailed picture of the production of the strip, and include unpublished correspondence, continuity drafts, proofs, negatives and unused artwork. It has been almost entirely unresearched hitherto (Tom Mason's reprint of four of the strips is unaware of this material and the extent of involvement by Gardner and other contributors to the project, and it receives only passing mention in Bounds' study of the 'transmedia' Perry Mason).

The strip came about as an impromptu collaboration between Gardner, his publisher Thayer Hobson, Bob Holdorf (a young promoter), and a succession of artists (Mel Keefer, Charles Lofgren and Frank Thorne). Unpublished correspondence shows Gardner and Hobson debating how to create fresh and simplified 'Mason' plots to suit the comic strip format, and the tension between mystery and adventure. As plots were generated by Gardner, Hobson (who assumed a prominent role in editing the strip) and other contributors, they can be seen debating issues of plot, continuity, 'art' and characterization, against the context of rival strips such as Dick Tracy.

The artwork preserved in the papers includes frames by Mel Keefer (then at the beginning of a distinguished career) for promotional material that were unused in the published strip, as well as others that were subsequently cropped to accommodate an extra frame into a strip. There are also six original drawings by an unidentified artist that were not used in the strip. The paper will consider how the artists set about creating an aesthetic for the strip, and with what success.

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**Who Makes Your Comics?:
Preliminary Findings from the Work in Comics Survey**

Alternatively repressed from the historical record or idolized by fan communities, the people who actually make our comics remain somewhat enigmatic figures – practitioners of what Padmini Ray Murray (2013) calls ‘invisible labour’. Much of what we know about the situation of comics creators is based on hearsay, anecdotes, and – at worst – publishers’ marketing communication, ranging from the 1960s ‘Myth of the Marvel Bullpen’ (Hatfield 2011) to Image Comics’ 2012 ‘Experience Creativity’ advertising campaign (Woo 2013). Moreover, scholarly accounts of comics production usually concentrate on exceptional creators rather than representative ones, the creative inputs of publishing and editorial staff, and, especially, the many aspirants who never quite manage to ‘make it’.

This paper reports preliminary findings from a quantitative survey of creative workers in the English-language field of comics production (defined as anyone who performed paid or unpaid labour affecting the content or aesthetic presentation of a work of comic art made available to the public in English in 2010 or later), conducted online beginning in November 2013. Responses were collected concerning creators’ demographic profiles, career histories, attitudes towards work, and economic well-being. (As of this writing, there are 417 completed surveys in the data set.) Despite the growing literature on creative work in cultural industries and the increased visibility of comic-derived properties within popular media writ large, this is the first systematic, sociological study of work in English-language comics – including both ‘mainstream’ and ‘alternative’ subfields, as well as new career paths generated by digital distribution – and promises to put data behind decades of anecdotes and impressionistic accounts of comics production.

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Damon Herd is a researcher and artist, currently working towards a PhD at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design, University of Dundee. His research area is life narratives told in the comics medium, with a particular interest in British comics, and the games authors play with truth. He has been published in *Studies in Comics*, and on The Comics Grid, and is a regular contributor to the comics blog Graphixia. He produces his own comics including *The Adventures of Ticking Boy*, and is also the organiser of DeeCAP, a comics performance event based in Dundee.

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David Huxley is Senior Lecturer on the MMU BA (Hons) Film and Media Studies course. His subject specialisms are the Graphic Novel and the Comic Strip, Censorship, Hollywood Film and Animation. He is the author of *Nasty Tales: Sex, Drugs and Rock n Roll in the Underground* (1990) and has written widely on American and British generic comics, and has written and illustrated a range of adult and children's comics. He has supervised a wide range of PhDs in the fields of the graphic novel and the comic strip, horror, genre and national film and examined a wide range of PhDs in film and media studies. He is the editor of the *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* (Routledge, 2010-).

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Joan lectures on the Film and Media BA Hons in The Department of Media at Manchester Metropolitan University. Her publications and research to date fall into two areas; subcultures and comics. Research into subcultures develops her PhD, 'Expressions of Nation and Place in British Surfing Identities' which focused on analysing representations of surfing, gendered and national identity through film and popular culture. In comics, her research focuses on comics audiences and women in comics. The comics component of her research is realised in her work with David Huxley editing Routledge's *Journal of Graphic Novels and Comics* and co-organising the annual International Conference of Graphic Novels and Comics with two other comics journals, *Studies in Comics* and *European Comic Art*.

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Chris Murray
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Chris Murray's research interests are in comics, film and popular culture, specifically the theorisation of how popular visual culture relates to other discourses (literature, art, and politics). Chris has published on various aspects of comics, including: the relationship between American superhero comics, popular culture and propaganda during World War Two; the comics of Alan Moore, Neil Gaiman and Grant Morrison; independent/small press comics (mini-comics); and British comics, specifically DC Thomson. Chris is editor (along with Dr Julia Round) of the peer-reviewed comics journal, *Studies in Comics* (Intellect Books). He is Secretary of the Scottish Word and Image Group, which researches aspects of the relationship between verbal and visual representation.
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Julia is a Senior Lecturer in the Media School at Bournemouth University, UK. Her teaching areas include adaptation, children's literature, crime, and Gothic. She is Convenor of Bournemouth University's Narrative Research Group, Co-Convenor of the AHRC-funded Digital Reading Network, and co-edits the academic journal *Studies in Comics*. Her research focuses on cross-media adaptation, reader response in children's literature, Gothic, and horror comics. Recent publications include her monograph *Gothic in Comics and Graphic Novels: A Critical Approach* (McFarland, 2014) and the co-edited collection *Real Lives Celebrity Stories* (Bloomsbury, 2014). Julia holds a PhD in English Literature from Bristol University, England, and MA in Creative Writing from Cardiff University, Wales, and has previously taught at Central St Martins, London, and Bristol University. For further details please visit www.juliaround.com.
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Sixth International Graphic Novel and Comics Conference & Ninth International Bande Dessinée Society Conference

Venue: Paris

University of London Institute in Paris/Institut national d'histoire de l'art

Monday 22nd – Saturday 27th June 2015

Voyages

Call for Papers

From their earliest manifestations, comic art characters have travelled the globe and beyond. Whether realist or fantastical, drawn to educate or to amuse, comics have used their considerable and unique expressive power to depict journeys, both physically and mentally, to “elsewhere”. As the medium has evolved worldwide into one attracting both an adult and a juvenile audience, this relationship to the voyage has diversified, as recently-developed trends such as “graphic journalism” attest. This conference will focus on the relationship of the sequential art form to the voyage and study representations of travel across the history of the medium up to the present day. The conference intends to consider the notion of “voyage” in a broad sense, to include related notions concerned with geographical movement – such as migration, exile or deployment – and with the psychic journey.

With this inclusive framework in mind the organising committee for the joint International Graphic Novel and Comics conference and International Bande Dessinée Society (IBDS) conference welcome abstracts on all areas of scholarship relating to comics, the graphic novel, and bande dessinée.

Abstracts of 150-200 words in advance of a 20-minute paper, as well as questions and expressions of interest, should be sent to:

comicsconference2015@gmail.com

Deadline: 31st December 2014

